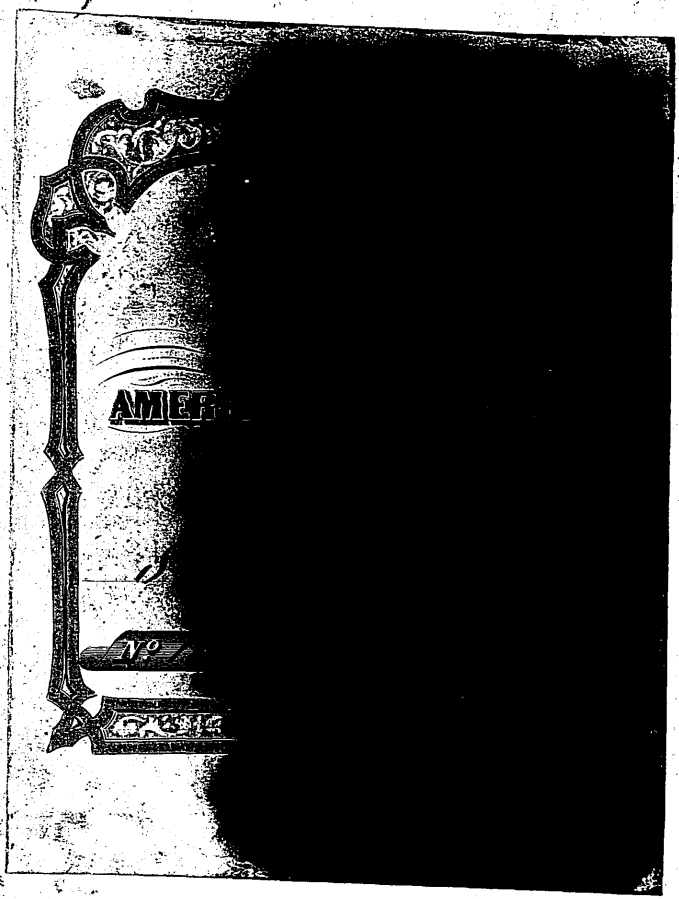
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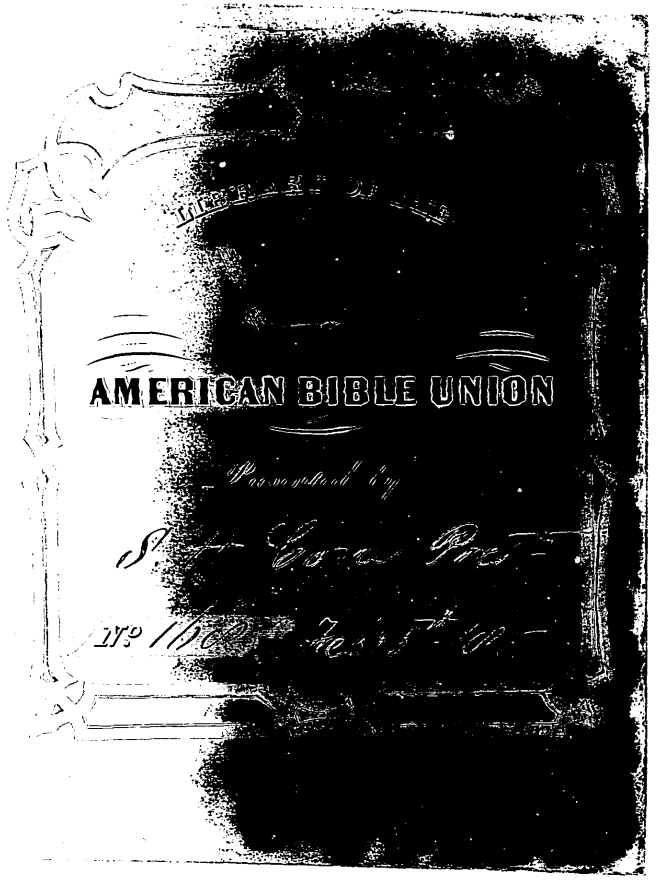


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ERRATA.

A few typographical errors have been noticed since the sheets were through the press. The reader will please to make the following corrections.

On page 4, 13th line, for " or" read a.
" " 29th " " arguments" read argument.
" 31, 26th " "πλόυω" read πλόνω.
" 51, 1st " "or," read and.
" 53, 24th " "right" read rite.
" 177, 8th " "fact" read part.
" 197, 9th line, before "church" read visible.

SOME NOTICES OF THE WORK.

This work, before being published, was submitted for examination to some of our most able and judicious brethren in the denomination. Among the expressions of views respecting its character and the effect to be anticipated from its publication, are the following:

Dr. Williams of New York testifies to "the clear and forcible character of the work, to the originality which is given to a discussion, which, from the number and ability of those who have conducted it, might seem trite,—to the sustained spirit of Christian moderation and kindness which renders the management of the subject both more winning and more cogent."

Dr. Dowling of New York, having examined several of the first sections states, that, although he was a little incredulous at first respecting the necessity for another treatise on the subject of baptism, a little examination had convinced him that "there might be even a *new work on Baptism*, without treading in the well worn track so long and so often beaten by others,"—and adds, "The fact that you have made the general and symbolic design of the ordinance the starting point in your argument, and have treated this part of the subject in a manner so thorough, so original, and so striking, has invested your work in my own mind with a degree of interest I could hardly have supposed I should feel in a new work on this subject.—I believe that your work when published cannot but prove an acceptable offering to all the thinking and intelligent of our denomination, while its candor and fairness will, to say the least, secure it a respectful consideration from our brethren of other denominations."

Prof. Raymond of Madison University, says, "I have no hesitation in saying that I believe it will prove (if published) a valuable contribution to the literature of this important subject." He considers "the general plan as equally original and striking"—"the question is considered in some points of light quite new"—"many familiar arguments are presented with new illustrations and enhanced force"—"the most recent phases of pedobaptism receive an appropriate share of attention"—"and the style of reasoning," he adds, "adopted in the portions I have read, appears to me eminently adapted to meet difficulties in the minds of our Pedobaptist brethren, too generally overlooked by our writers, or not treated with the respect due, if not to the

difficulties themselves, to the minds which are embarrassed by them. I sincerely hope that the book will be published, and find its way into the hands, not merely of Baptists, but of intelligent and candid men in other denominations; who will see that the Baptist argument, so far from being exhausted, is only beginning to be developed."

To omit particular reference to communications from several other brethren, who express themselves in language equally commendatory—who speak of "the candor, accuracy, and clearness of the discussion of the points embraced"—of "the novel and eminently scriptural character of the argument"—of the work as exhibiting "the entire harmony of the scriptures in regard to the design, form, and subjects of baptism"—of "its peculiarity in showing not only that the passages relied upon for the support of Pedobaptism fail of establishing it, but that they *all* may be urged in favor of the opposite position,"—the following will suffice.

"The undersigned have examined with a high degree of satisfaction a treatise on the subject of baptism prepared by Rev. Edmund Turney, pastor of the Baptist church in Granville, Ohio. During the short time it remained in our hands each of its parts could be read only by some one of our number: but in this way the whole [this refers to the first four chapters,] has been carefully examined. We hesitate not to say, that we know of no treatise on the same subject better adapted to be useful, and none which more clearly and happily illustrates the scriptural view of the design and nature of Christian baptism. The spirit of candor and impartiality in which it is written, is eminently adapted to commend its arguments to the candid consideration of all who are conscientiously desirous of obtaining correct views of the ordinances of the gospel. We think the work ought to be published, and that great good may be expected from its extensive circulation."

J. S. MAGINNIS,
T. J. CONANT,
Hamilton, N. Y. July 22, 1846. GEO. W. EATON.

Rev. W. W. Everts, pastor of the Laight St. Baptist Church, New York, speaking of the work, says, "It developes the scripture doctrine of Baptism, not merely by critical notices of particular passages, but by a learned, able, and exegetical examination of the entire harmony of the Scriptures in regard to the design, form, and subjects of this ordinance.

"Its allusions to classical and ecclesiastical writers evince the accuracy and candor of the Christian scholar. But its primary, earnest, and constant appeal is to 'the law and the testimony;' and it aims to exhibit, not the traditional or ecclesiastical, but the *scriptural* law of baptism.

THE

SCRIPTURAL LAW OF BAPTISM,

OR, THE

DESIGN OF BAPTISM

Presented and applied,

LEADING TO AN EXAMINATION OF

ITS FORM, ITS SUBJECTS, ITS AUTHORITY,

AND

ITS RELATIVE POSITION.

BY EDMUND TURNEY,
PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, GRANVILLE, OHIO.

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PREFACE.

THE general plan of the following treatise was suggested to the author by a series of discourses delivered by him in 1841, before the South Baptist Church in Hartford, Conn. It was at first his intention simply to prepare a small work on the *Design* of baptism, including an exhibition of its relation to proper views of the form, the subjects, the authority, and the relative position of the ordinance. The intimate connexion of the subject with other points of interest and importance pertaining to the nature and relations of baptism, subsequently led to the determination to extend somewhat the original plan; and the work was gradually expanded into its present form. It is now given to the public with the hope that it will not be deemed a work of supererogation. In its preparation the author has acted under the conviction, that, notwithstanding the numerous valuable works on baptism already published, there is in this field of Christian investigation, "much land yet to be possessed;" while in many cases, even the most familiar facts may be presented with increased impressiveness and effect. He believes it will be found upon examination that a comparatively small portion of the work is a repetition of the arguments presented by other authors. He has endeavored, it is true, to introduce these arguments sufficiently to give completeness to the work,—to constitute it, in fact, a *complete manual* on the subject of baptism. But this object being secured, he has confined his attention chiefly to the presentation of new facts and illustrations, or the exhibition of former ones in new points of light.

In his mode of argumentation he has seldom assumed a defensive position. By appealing to facts not so much for the purpose of removing objections, as of proving the opposite positions, he has aimed at accomplishing the twofold object, of showing that these facts when used in the defence of error, are actually misapplied, and of securing their full force in establish-

ing the truth. He has,—if the figure may be introduced without suggesting the existence of a warlike spirit, than which nothing, it is believed, is more at variance with the character and spirit of the work,—he has taken occasion in relation to most of the topics discussed, to seize the strong holds of the opponents, and to turn their chosen implements of defence or attack to the demolition of their own system, and the support of the opposite cause. For illustration of this remark reference is made to the sections, in which the argument drawn from the design of baptism, is stated and applied; in which the facts pertaining to the history of infant baptism are presented; in which the passages relating to the case of little children, the baptism of households, the covenant of circumcision, or natural relationship to the people of God, or the privileges pertaining to the Jewish dispensation, are examined. This method of argumentation has given occasion for showing that pedobaptism is not merely without scriptural foundation, but is actually refuted by the sacred writers. About one-fourth part of the entire work is devoted to the illustration of the specific point, that the New Testament expressly sets aside the only ground on which the baptism of infants is, or can be defended, and that consequently their right to be admitted to the ordinance is *positively denied.* The sections, likewise, in which the historical argument for infant baptism is considered, are introduced, not so much to show that there is no ground for believing the practice to be of apostolic origin, as to prove directly that it did *not* originate with the apostles, and to explain the causes which led to its introduction at a later period.

Sections 6 and 7 of Chapter III. in which the arguments for pedobaptism drawn from the covenant of circumcision, and the supposed identity of the Christian church and the Jewish theocracy, is examined somewhat at length, are mainly expositions of Rom. 11: 11–32, and 4: 9–18, and were originally published as articles in the Christian Review; which will sufficiently account for the particular form in which the points discussed, are presented.

In Sect. 3, Chap. II. as in several sections pertaining to the significancy of baptism, will be found a refutation of the views advanced by President Beecher in his articles on Baptism in the Biblical Repository. The author, in addition to showing that

Mr. Beecher has placed the decision of the point under examination on a false issue, has endeavored to meet his positions on his own ground, and to expose their fallacy by proof which he himself admits must be, in case it can be adduced, decisive.

The Chapter on what is designated, for lack of a more appropriate term, the *authority* of baptism, is commended to the candid attention of all Christians who have not been immersed on profession of their faith in Christ, especially the members of Pedobaptist churches.

The Chapter on the *relative position* of baptism, consists chiefly in an exhibition of the scriptural terms of admission to the Lord's supper. The connexion of baptism and church membership with church privileges, is presented as fully as the limits of the work seemed to allow, or, perhaps, the nature of the case, really to demand.

Several points claiming examination which could not well be introduced into the body of the work, have been discussed in the form of Notes in an Appendix. Attention is called particularly to the examination of the figure, "the baptism of the Holy Spirit."

In his preparation of the work the author, while he has aimed at presenting his positions with force and earnestness, has endeavored to treat the views of his opponents with courtesy and fairness, and to maintain throughout the discussion a proper degree of christian candor and kindness. With the hope that the same spirit will be cherished in its reception and perusal, it is now sent forth to the public. Should it be effectual in aiding to diffuse just views of Christian baptism in its various aspects and relations, and to extend a proper regard for its authority, the object contemplated in its preparation will be accomplished.

Granville, Nov. 1846.

ERRATA,—On page 154, tenth line from the top, for "temporal" read "temporary."

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INTRODUCTION.

In an examination of the subject of Christian Baptism our first inquiry naturally is, What do the Scriptures teach? As in all the positive institutions of religion, our only reason for action is the revealed will of the Lawgiver. What does he require? Of whom does he require it? For what purpose is it to be performed? are questions for an answer to which we must apply directly to the word of God. And the order in which we have stated them is evidently the most natural in which they are suggested to our minds. First, what is the nature of the requirement? What is the act to be performed? In determining this question, we are not to inquire, primarily, what seems to us the most reasonable—what accords best with our own views of fitness or propriety—what is, in our apprehension, best adapted to answer the end intended? We believe, indeed, it will be found, upon examination, that the act required in Christian baptism, is not only reasonable, but peculiarly appropriate and expressive; that it, in fact, strikingly illustrates the wisdom of the Master in selecting it. But it is not on this ground that we are to ascertain originally what is duty. Our only appropriate inquiry is, What has Christ enjoined? As with respect to the ordinance of the Supper, we learn his will from the terms of enactment, "Take, *eat—drink* ye all of it," and nothing is regarded as

obedience but the performance of these acts; so in baptism, we are to ascertain what is the act required by referring to the import of the terms in which it is enjoined. And finding that this act was actually observed as baptism, under the sanction of Christ and his apostles, we may feel doubly assured that we have not mistaken his will.

Having thus learned what is the nature of the requirement, our next appropriate inquiry is, On whom do the Scriptures teach us this requirement is binding? As in instituting the Supper, our Lord left it to be observed by his church; as among the prescribed requisites, the observants are supposed, for example, to be capable of "discerning the Lord's body," and to be "partakers" of the thing represented, the Bread of life, see 1 Cor., 10: 16, 17, 11; so in baptism, it might reasonably be inferred that its observance would devolve on those possessing certain qualifications: and to ascertain what these qualifications are, we must refer directly to the teachings of Christ and his apostles. These questions being decided, we are prepared to inquire, For what purpose is baptism enjoined? What is its design?

This, we say, is the most natural order of treating these several points. There are reasons, however, why, in an extended examination of the subject, we should partly reverse this order, and begin with the inquiry, What is the design of baptism? Among these reasons we notice particularly the position very generally assumed by Pedobaptists at the present day in respect to baptism, to wit—that in ascertaining the will of Christ we must rely, not so much upon the import of the terms employed in instituting the ordinance, and the practice of the apostles in its observance, as upon a right conception of its design: and any thing, it is conten-

ded, that will fulfill its design may be regarded as obedience. While we utterly discard the principle involved in this position, we may find an advantage in accomodating our course of argumentation to the position as actually assumed. It cannot be doubted that much of the error and confusion of sentiment prevalent with respect to baptism in general, arises from erroneous views of its design. Let its design be fully understood and appreciated, and several points pertaining to its nature, its efficacy, and its importance, will, even without further investigation, be decided.

1. It will lead to a satisfactory determination of the identical point alluded to in our foregoing remarks—*what is baptism?* It will at least teach us what baptism is *not;* and will thus enable us to decide which, among several transactions designated baptism, is to be adopted; and that too, on grounds, which, if sustained, are admitted, even by Pedobaptists, to be decisive. For whatever may be their views of the argument drawn from the import of the terms of enactment, and the practice sanctioned by Christ and his apostles, they readily acknowledge that nothing can be valid baptism that fails of fulfilling its design. Hence should it appear that this design can be met only by the act enjoined, there will be twofold reason for adhering strictly to its observance.

We may pursue the same process in an examination respecting the subjects, the authority, and the relative position of the ordinance, and having arrived, on this single ground, at a satisfactory conclusion on each of these points, we may introduce the other arguments pertaining to the subject, as corroborative of the same positions. By this plan, while the harmony between the design of baptism and the express teaching of the

New Testament respecting its nature and claims, will become more fully apparent, the whole subject will, we trust, be presented in a more striking and impressive light.

2. A proper consideration of the design of baptism will tend to correct extravagant views of *its efficacy* or *effects*. The idea that baptism is essential to salvation, or is efficacious in procuring the forgiveness of sin, or is a means of regeneration and introduction into a state of grace, could have originated only in erroneous or defective views of its design. To the same cause must be ascribed chiefly its continued prevalence. A right conception of the object for which baptism was appointed, not only does not embrace, nor even suggest, the idea of baptismal regeneration or purification; it absolutely precludes its indulgence. Let the relation between the profession made in baptism, and the facts professed, the sign and the thing signified, be viewed in its proper light, and all ground for the support of this anti-christian dogma, so fruitful of evil consequences, is removed.

3. The design of baptism, duly considered, serves to show *its importance*, as a divine requirement, and an ordinance of the gospel. While, on the one hand, extravagant views of its efficacy have been, and are still, widely entertained, another error into which Christians at the present day are equally liable to fall, consists in a want of appreciating its importance, or properly regarding its authority. It is very generally viewed simply as an external rite, the observance of which is to be regulated mainly by the feelings or convenience of those on whom it is enjoined—a ceremony which may be, at least, neglected by them without any serious dereliction of duty, or unhappy conse-

quences either to themselves or the church. Hence the indifference manifested with regard to all questions relating to its right observance, and the difficulty experienced in efforts to impress its claims upon the conscience. The remedy for this lies in a proper appreciation of its design. Its importance, aside from the fact that it is a divine requirement, depends on the importance of the end it was designed to accomplish. Let this be viewed in its true light, and baptism will cease to be regarded simply as a question about forms and external rites which are mere appendages to the Christian system. Let its connexion with a proper profession of religion, its character as a standing memorial of the great facts which lie at the foundation of the gospel scheme, the purpose it was designed to serve, and the influence it actually exerts, in the promotion of personal piety, and in the preservation and extension of an operative christianity in the world, be properly appreciated, and not only would its observance be effectually enforced, but the whole subject relating to its nature and position, would be invested with new and peculiar interest, and baptism would once more be restored to the place in the estimation of Christians, which it occupies in the New Testament.

CHAPTER I.

THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

ITS GENERAL DESIGN.

THE general design of baptism is A FORMAL AND PRACTICAL PROFESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. When properly observed it is a declaration on the part of the subject that in the exercise of faith and submission he has embraced the gospel; that he has received Christ as his Saviour and Sovereign, and is determined to be henceforth identified with his cause.

Baptism is accordingly represented as being administered *in the name of Christ.* The inquiring multitude on the day of Pentecost were directed to "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." The Samaritans believing "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 2: 38; 8: 16. See also Acts 10: 48; 19: 5. The import of this phraseology is sufficiently apparent from 1 Cor. 1: 12–15. "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had *baptized in my own name.*" The apostle could have been accused of baptizing in his own name in no other sense than that he baptized those who were converted under his ministry *as his adherents or*

disciples. To show his brethren the impropriety of professing to be the followers or adherents of himself or any other apostle, he reminds them that they had been baptized *in the name of Christ,* or as *his* disciples. In being baptized they had solemnly averred that they had chosen *him* for their Master; and hence for them to profess severally, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas," was virtually renouncing their baptism.

Of similar import is the kindred phrase, "*baptized into Christ,*" Gal. 3: 27; Rom. 6: 3. It expresses not so much the effect, as the *nature* or *direction* of baptism. The disciples of Christ having been brought into vital union with him by faith, are then baptized into him, as they subsequently become more fully *instructed into him,* and thus "*grow up into him* in all things." Eph. 4: 15. They are baptized not into the principles of Judaism, or heathenism, or human philosophy, but into Christ—into an acknowledgement of his authority and character as exhibited in the gospel. The form of expression is the same as occurs in 1 Cor. 10: 2. "Our fathers were all baptized unto or *into* (eis) *Moses* in the cloud and in the sea." No one infers, that the Israelites in being baptized, *became* the followers of Moses, that they then for the first time submitted to him as their leader. But *being baptized* they were baptized into *him,* or in such a manner that his authority was formally recognized and acknowledged.

The design of baptism as a profession of submission to Christ, is still more clearly brought to view in Gal. 3: 27. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ," or as believers in him, "have *put on Christ,*" have assumed his character—have taken the appropriate badge of discipleship. The argument of the apos-

tle leads him to speak of baptism as *the appointed and all sufficient means of professing union with Christ.* It indicates that all who have submitted to it, unless it shall appear that they have made an unworthy profession, are, without distinction of nation, sex, or condition, to be regarded as his followers. The Gentile christians, no less than the Jewish, are to be recognized as "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," entitled to all the privileges of his most favored disciples. Verses 26, 28.

We accordingly find that *faith in Christ* is uniformly represented in the New Testament as a prerequisite to baptism. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that *believeth and is baptized* shall be saved." Mark 16: 15, 16. It is necessary that faith should precede baptism, inasmuch as the thing professed must precede the profession. As there is "one Lord" in whom all christians believe, so there is "one baptism" by which their faith is publicly avowed. Eph. 4: 5. See also Acts 8: 37; 15: 4.

Intimately connected with the idea of faith is that of *evangelical repentance.* Faith in Christ implies a reception of his gospel, and a submission to its requirements, one of the most prominent of which is repentance—a renunciation of sin, and a consecration of the affections to God. This was made conspicuous in the preaching of John the Baptist. While he announced the approach of the kingdom of God, and taught the people that "they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus," he required them to "repent," and to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance." On complying with these directions they were baptized. Hence it is said that he baptized them *unto repentance*; or in profession that they had

renounced their sins, and were prepared to conform their lives to the principles of the kingdom of God. Mat. 3: 11. See also Acts 2: 38.

Baptism is accordingly styled "the answer of a good conscience toward God." 1 Peter 3: 21. It implies that the subject of it is actuated by a *conscientious* regard for the will of God, that his mind has become renewed and purified.*

Baptism, while it is thus a profession of what has been experienced by the subject, contains a distinct recognition of *the interposition of God* in his behalf. It indicates that he has become changed, that he has been constituted a new creature; and, of course, points directly to the cause of this change, *the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit.* It also indicates that he has complied with the conditions on which *pardon* is promised; that he possesses those feelings of penitence and faith which impart the consciousness of forgiveness and reconciliation with God. This is implied in the words, "baptism of repentance *for* or literally *unto* (eis) *the remission of sins.*" Mark 1: 4. Compare the form of expression with that used, Mat. 3: 11, "I indeed baptize you with water *unto* (eis) *repentance.*" This denotes, as has been shown, not that the people were brought into repentance by baptism; but, that having repented they were baptized in profession of their repentance. In like manner they were directed to "repent and be converted *that their sins might be blotted out.*" Compare Acts 2: 38; 3: 19. They were then to be baptized *thereunto,* or in token that they had forsaken their sins, and were thus in a condition to appropriate to themselves the promise of pardon.†

*Note A. Appendix. †Note B. Appendix.

The reason is thus obvious for administering baptism *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.* An acknowledgement of the doctrine of the Trinity as holding a conspicuous place in the revelation of the gospel, is implied in a simple profession of faith in Christ; while in a confession of indebtedness to divine interposition for the remission of sin, and the renewal of the heart, the office and work and claims of each of the persons in the Trinity, are brought definitely and prominently to view. The subjects of baptism profess their allegiance to the Father as their Creator and Sovereign, their reception of the Son as their Lord and Redeemer, and their submission to the Holy Spirit as their Guide and Helper and Sanctifier.

Baptism being thus a profession of submission to the gospel was designed as *a pre-requisite of admission into the Christian church.* In this light it appears to have been regarded by the apostles from the first organization of the church at Jerusalem. Those who gladly received the word were baptized, and thereupon, as we are left to infer, were added to the church. Acts 2: 41, 47. It is obvious, alike from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, that none were admitted members of the apostolic churches, but such as had been baptized on profession of faith in Christ, 1 Cor. 1: 13, 17; Col. 2: 12; Eph. 4: 15; 1 Peter 3: 21. etc.

The ordinance was thus constituted *a visible line of demarkation between the church of Christ and the world.* It was expected that those who became the disciples of Christ would "confess him before men" by being baptized; that they would thus publicly identify themselves with the company of his followers, and consent to place themselves under their watchcare and discipline. Without some such visible line of distinction,

it is difficult to conceive how the church could have accomplished the object for which it was established.

SECTION II.

THE SYMBOLICAL IMPORT OF BAPTISM,—REMARKS ON THE NATURE OF SYMBOLICAL INSTITUTIONS.

A general view of the design of baptism has been given in the preceding section. We now proceed to consider it as a SYMBOLICAL ORDINANCE. It is not merely a profession, but an *emblematical* profession of the change evinced in the character of its subjects. Like the ordinance of the Supper it *shows forth*, or exhibits in visible emblems, the facts for the commemoration of which it was instituted. Upon this point there is among Christians a universal agreement. It becomes then, an interesting and important inquiry, What was it designed to represent? As an emblematical rite, what does it signify?

It is generally assumed that its symbolical import is *single*, that it was designed to represent *but one thing*. And the ingenuity of authors has been elicited to connect in one view the different representations of its significancy found in the New Testament. We see no occasion, however, for anxiety on this point. There is nothing in the nature and general design of the ordinance, nor in the analogy of other symbolical institutions, to forbid the supposition that it was designed to be the symbol of more than one thing. If the same transaction may represent two or more facts intimately connected with each other, or even the same fact in different emblematical lights, it is only thereby rendered the more expressive and significant.

The primary design of the Jewish Passover as a symbolical ordinance was to represent the deliverance of the Israelites, recorded Ex. 12. This, however, did not prevent it from being equally a type of the sacrifice of Christ, and of the deliverance thereby effected. 1 Cor. 5: 7; John 19: 36. Its significancy was consequently *twofold.*

Another illustration of this principle is found in the ordinance of the Lord's supper. In one view, it shows forth *the death of Christ.* It represents his body as *broken* for his people, his blood as *shed* for the remission of their sins. It exhibits him as *a sacrifice* offered on their behalf, to which they are to look for salvation. In another view it represents him as the source of *spiritual nourishment* to his people, who are regarded as "*partakers* of that one bread," the Bread of life, who signify their actual "*communion* of the body and blood of Christ." And the ordinance is thus rendered *doubly* expressive.

It will be no occasion for surprise, therefore, should something analogous to this be discovered with reference to the ordinance of baptism.

SECTION III.

BAPTISM A SYMBOL OF THE WASHING AWAY OF SIN.

Baptism, as has already been considered, is the appointed means of professing that spiritual change which is effected in the character of an individual upon his reception of the gospel. This is symbolically presented in baptism as THE WASHING AWAY OF SIN.

This was very probably, in a limited sense, the significancy ascribed by the Jews to baptism when intro-

duced by John the Baptist. Evidence of this, it is thought, is found in John 3: 25, 26; where allusion is evidently made to the Jewish *ablutions* or *washings*. This supposition receives additional support from 1 Pet. 3: 21. The only passage, however, in which baptism is described by the sacred writers as a symbol of the washing away of sin, is Acts 22: 16. "Arise and be baptized and *wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord." That this language was not designed to represent baptism as a means of removing the guilt and condemnation of sin, is perfectly obvious. Saul had already become changed in his character and relations. His enmity to the gospel had been subdued. He had been constituted "a chosen vessel" to the Lord. And he is accordingly addressed by Ananias as a christian brother. There can be no room for doubt, therefore, that he had been forgiven and accepted of God. The passage, however, clearly teaches that baptism is in some sense actually indicative of the washing away of sin. The one is related to the other in the same sense that "the communion of the *body* and *blood* of Christ," is related to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17. The "communion" or participation is, of course, *symbolical*, the external act being, by a common figure of speech, designated as that which it represents. So in baptism, that which *distinguishes* the transaction is its relation to the thing signified. It is not the external washing that constitutes it a gospel ordinance, but the fact that it is expressive of an internal and spiritual change; and this is represented in Acts 22: 16 as the washing away of sin. Saul was directed, not to perform a mere physical or ceremonial cleansing, not, in a literal sense, to "put away the filth of the flesh," but in an appro-

priate emblem to wash away his *sins*, to indicate that his *moral character* had become renewed in holiness. The mode of expression is, as we have before intimated, the same as occurs in passages which describe the symbolical import of the Lord's supper; as 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25; Mat. 26: 26–28, etc., where the communicant is represented as partaking, that is, in emblem, of the body and blood of Christ.*

The passage thus viewed is a brief description of the profession made in Christian baptism. The individual baptized professes that he has complied with the injunction, "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes." Isa. 1: 16; Jer. 1: 14. He declares his determination to "cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 1 Cor. 7: 1. He expresses the hope that his sins have been pardoned or washed away through the merits of Christ; that he has experienced "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and at the same time he acknowledges his obligation to live in accordance with the character thus acquired. He professes his hearty and entire acquiescence in the work which has been wrought in his behalf.

* An additional reason for the language used Acts 22: 16, may, perhaps, be found in the fact that baptism was the only means of effectually washing away the *stain* which had become attached to the *public character* of Saul, as an enemy to Christianity. For although he may have become in the sight of God a new man, he could stand before the world in a new character, as a friend and servant of Christ, only by publicly renouncing his opposition to his cause, and taking upon himself the appointed badge of discipleship. The appropriateness of the language to express this idea, however, is owing entirely to the fact that baptism is, as we have explained, really *symbolical* of the washing away of sin. Otherwise we might as properly speak of sin as being washed away in the ordinance of the Supper.

SECTION IV.

BAPTISM NOT A SYMBOL SPECIFICALLY OF PURIFICATION.

Baptism being represented Acts 22: 16, as an emblem of the washing away of sin, it has commonly been assumed that it is significant of *purification in general.* These propositions, however, as will be evident on reflection, are clearly distinguishable, and ought not to be confounded. The former neither includes nor implies the latter. Inattention to this fact is the cause of much of the confusion and error prevalent with respect to the significancy of baptism.

To present this point in its proper light it may be necessary to examine the use made of figures of speech, or metaphorical modes of expression, in symbolical ordinances. To exhibit a fact pertaining to the mind in an appropriate and expressive emblem, we must first select some natural figure or metaphor under which that fact is accustomed to be presented. It is difficult to conceive how a spiritual change can be vividly represented by a material emblem, unless that change is first compared to something analogous in the material world. The change experienced upon a reception of the gospel is described as *coming* to Christ, *turning* to him, *looking* to him, *partaking* or *tasting* of his grace, *drinking* into his Spirit, *putting on* the new man, *dying* to sin, having sin *covered, blotted out, cast away*, &c. These are clearly distinct figures of speech, and might become the foundation for so many separate symbolical transactions; which, although they might represent essentially the same thing, could not be exchanged one for another *without destroying their distinctive character.* An act emblematical of *putting on*

the new man, for example, would not be symbolical of the *blotting out* of sin.* The same principle is appli-

*In further illustration of this position, it may be observed that no one will, it is presumed, contend that the Lord's supper as a representation of what is experienced by the observant, is of the same import with baptism. And yet it would be difficult to show in what essential point it differs, except in the different lights or aspects in which that experience is presented. The former, we say, represents our "*communion* of the body and blood of Christ," our *participation* in the blessings of his mediation, and this, as our Lord has expressly intimated, includes the remission of our sins, and the renewal of our nature, or the impartation of spiritual life. See Mat. 26: 28; John 5: 53, 54, 57. But these, it will be perceived, are precisely the facts indicated by baptism. The Lord's supper, again, represents our *reception of Christ*, and our dependence on his atonement for salvation; and this is essentially what is understood by *faith in Christ* which is professed in baptism. John 1: 12. Once more, the Lord's supper indicates that the observant has experienced the efficacy of the *blood* of Christ in the removal of sin, Mat. 26: 28; and in Rev. 1: 5, this is associated with the *washing* away of sin—the identical figure connected with the significancy of baptism. In short, both ordinances represent an interest in the blessings and effects of Christ's mediation; one is accordingly to be administered "in his name;" the other to be observed "in remembrance of him." They alike indicate, that, in consequence of his interposition, the relations and state and character of the observants, have become changed, that they have, in a word, been redeemed from sin, and made partakers of spiritual life. But shall we, on the ground of this fact, assume the position that the two ordinances, as far as they refer to what has been experienced by the observant, are of the same import? Such would evidently be a most unwarrantable and unreasonable assumption. The different aspects or emblematical lights in which the general facts to which both ordinances relate are presented, are sufficient to constitute an essential difference in their nature and significancy. The great facts pertaining to the work of Christ, and to the experience of his people—to both of which each ordinance directly refers, com. Rom. 6: 4; 1 Cor. 11: 26; 10: 16, 17,—by being presented in different emblems, in accordance with different modes of conception and of representation adopted by the human mind, with different allusions, and for what are, in some respects, different purposes, are made more impressive, their various bearings and relations are more clearly perceived, and they become more fully incorporated with the habitual conceptions and feelings of christians. Thus, while baptism is placed at the threshhold of the Christian church to indicate to

cable to the figure associated with the significancy of baptism, the *washing* away of sin.

Purification, it should be borne in mind, is effected in various ways;—by means of fire in *refining*, see Mal. 3: 3; of wind in *winnowing*, Mat. 3: 12; of water in *washing*, Eph. 5: 26; or of a merely ritual observance, as in *sprinkling*, Heb. 9: 13. The figures employed in these passages are as really distinct as those just adduced; and cannot in reference to a symbolical transaction be substituted one for another. A rite significant of *refining*, for example, however forcibly it might represent *purification* as presented in Mal. 3: 3; Zech. 13: 9, etc., would entirely fail of expressing the significancy of baptism as explained in Acts 22: 16. Baptism was never designed to represent the *refining* of the soul, its purification from the *dross* or *alloy* of sin; nor the *sprinkling* of the heart from an evil conscience. These are ideas entirely foreign to the ordinance. It is associated with the general idea of purification in no other way than as it is an emblem specifically of "the *washing* away of sin."

It is a fact worthy of notice, that the writers of the New Testament in alluding to spiritual purification or cleansing, commonly, whenever any specifica-

the world an *entrance* on the enjoyment and pursuit of what is revealed in the gospel, a full and final *separation* to a life of faith on the Son of God, an actual *assimilation* in spirit and character to his death and resurrection, the Lord's supper is a standing ordinance to indicate the *continuance* of the exercises and facts embraced in this profession, and hence serves as a continual "remembrancer" of what the christian has received through Christ. The ordinances, however, differ, as we have shown, not only in the position they occupy, and the purposes they were designed to serve, but also in their nature and significancy; and this difference, at least as far as the experience of the observants is concerned, *consists*, we repeat, *mainly in the different aspects, or emblematical lights in which the general facts to which they both equally relate, are represented.*

tion is made as to mode, represent it as a *washing*. This seems to have been the prevailing usage among the primitive Christians. In no instance in the New Testament, except in those portions addressed expressly to the *Jews*,—an exception, which, from the nature of the case, cannot affect our argument,—is spiritual purification described by language borrowed from mere ritual observances.* Paul addressing the Corinthians, says "Such were some of you, but ye are *washed*, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified," 1 Cor. 6: 11. So also Tit. 3: 5,—"According to his mercy he saved us by the *washing* of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Eph. 5: 26,—"Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the *washing* of water by the word." So settled does this usage appear to have been, that it was preserved where we should least have expected it. It was retained even at the hazard of introducing incongruity into the description. Thus in Rev. 1: 5; 7: 14. "Unto him that hath loved us and *washed* us from our sins *in his own blood*." "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have *washed their robes* and *made them white*, in the blood of the Lamb." In the former of these passages the term employed is λούω, (louo) which properly designates the act of bathing. In the latter the term used is πλύνω, (pluno) which

* 1 Peter, 1: 2, cannot be properly adduced as an exception. For, first, the epistle is addressed to, although, as appears from various expressions contained in it, not exclusively designed for the Jews, designated chap. 1: 1, as *the strangers of the dispersion*, παρεπιδήμοι διασπορᾶς. Compare James 1: 1. Secondly, sprinkling under the law was associated with the idea simply of *atonement* or *consecration*, no less than of purification. See Ex. 29: 21, 26, 29, 33; Lev. 1: 3—5; 4: 2, 6, 13, 17, 20; 6: 27, etc. The design of the apostle Peter evidently is to speak of the blood of Christ as the ground of *atonement*, which may, or may not, be associated with the figure of a purification.

is appropriated specifically to the washing or *rinsing of clothes*, the effect of which is, of course, not a ceremonial purification, but, as here definitely stated, to "make them white." No doubt, therefore, can exist that the figure of washing is employed in these passages.*

A sufficient reason for the preference given to this figure, aside from its perfect *naturalness* to denote cleansing, is found in the fact that a great portion of those to whom the gospel was preached would not readily have appreciated the force of figures borrowed from the Jewish ritual. How mere sprinkling could be an appropriate emblem of cleansing, they would not easily apprehend. They would be able to discover no *natural* correspondence between the sign and the thing signified. Hence it is not surprising that the apostles whenever they had occasion, while writing to the Gentile churches, to speak of spiritual cleansing, should uniformly, either leave the mode undefined, or introduce the figure of washing. This was a figure the force of which they could perceive without a special acquaintance with the *sacrificial* and *ceremonial* purifications of the Jews. It was simple and conformed to nature; and was consequently well adapted to be associated with the significancy of an external rite, as baptism.

* On the representation of these passages is founded the beautiful and expressive lines of Cowper—

> "There is a fountain filled with blood,
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
> Lose all their guilty stains,"

as also the following from Watts—

> "And strangely washed their raiment white,
> In Jesus' dying blood."

In an ordinance of the gospel it might be expected that its significancy would become apparent, not by tracing it through the intervention of *other ceremonies*, but by simply comparing the sign with the thing signified. It might reasonably be anticipated that there would be a *direct* and *obvious* and *natural*, and not merely a *remote* and *ceremonial*, correspondence between the external act, and the object to be represented. And hence we could hardly have imagined that a ceremony conformed to the figure of sprinkling as expressive of purification, would *in any event*, have been introduced. These considerations sufficiently account for the fact that in the New Testament, the washing away of sin, and this alone, as expressive of purification, is connected with the significancy of baptism.

SECTION V.

BAPTISM A SYMBOL OF SPIRITUAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

BAPTISM was further designed to be a symbolical profession of DEATH AND RESURRECTION,—DEATH TO SIN, AND RESURRECTION TO NEWNESS OF LIFE. These figures differ from that of washing in being more striking and expressive. The individual baptized professes that he is, not merely washed from his sins, but dead to sin. Not merely has his nature become freed from defilement; he has entered upon a new life, a new state of existence.

Such is the representation in Rom. 6: 2–5. "How shall we that are *dead to sin* live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as have

been baptized in Jesus Christ, have been baptized *into his death?*" or into a conformity to him with respect to death? As he denied himself and became obedient unto death on our behalf, so we in being baptized profess to have denied ourselves in becoming dead to sin, dead to the gratification of our selfish and unholy passions. "Therefore," or on account of this design of the ordinance, "*we are buried with him by baptism into death.*" The same view is presented in Col. 2: 12, 20; 3: 1–3. "*Buried with him* in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." "If ye be *dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world*, why as though living in the world are ye subject to [carnal] ordinances?" "If ye be risen with Christ seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, *not on things on the earth. For ye are dead*, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

From these passages it appears that in baptism there is a profession of death, not only to sin as such, but to the world, its rudiments, its pleasures, its temptations. The individual baptized declares that he is no longer influenced by the world, that he is free from the control of its maxims, the fear of its persecutions, and the desire of its sinful pleasures.

With this death to sin and the world, is associated in the symbolical language of baptism, a *resurrection to a new and spiritual life.* "We are buried with him in baptism, *that*, like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, *even so we also should walk in newness of life.* For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, *we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*" "Buried with him in bap-

tism, *wherein also ye are risen with him* through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead." "If ye then be *risen with Christ*, seek those things which are above." Rom. 6: 4, 5; Col. 2: 12; 3: 1.

In these passages we are taught that as there is in baptism a likeness or representation of death, so also of a resurrection,—that as there is a burial, so there is a rising again, and that this is expressive of an obligation to walk in newness of life. As the christian has passed from death unto life, as he has emerged from a state of moral darkness and insensibility to the consciousness and enjoyment of spiritual things, as he has new views, new principles of action, new sources of happiness, new objects of pursuit, nothing could be more appropriate to express the change, than the figure of a resurrection, an emerging into a new state of being.

The import of baptism as an emblematical profession of death and resurrection, is thus presented in a clear and interesting light. The meaning of Rom. 6: 2–11; Col. 2: 12, 20; 3: 1–5, is too obvious to be easily misunderstood or obscured. Hence the frequency and explicitness with which the significancy of baptism as exhibited in these passages, is alluded to in the writings of the early Christian Fathers.

Hermas, whose works are referred to the commencement of the second century, speaks of "men going down into the water bound to death, and coming up out of it appointed to life."

The author of the Apostolic Constitutions, says, "Baptism relates to the death of Christ; the water answers to the grave; the immersion represents our dying with him, the emersion our rising with him."

Chrysostom represents "the symbol of baptism" as referring "at the same time to burial and death, and to resurrection and life. For our heads being immersed in the water, as in a sepulchre, the old man is buried, and sinking down, the whole is concealed at once; then as we emerge, the new man rises again. For as it is easy to be baptized (immersed), and to emerge, so it is easy for God to bury the old man, and to bring forth to the light the new."

Basil. "We being baptized into death in symbol (of the death of Christ), should die to sin; and by the ascent from the baptism (the immersion) being raised as from the dead, we should live to God in Christ Jesus, and should die no more, that is, should sin no more."

Cyril. "As Jesus, taking the sins of the whole world, died, that having put to death sin, he might raise thee up in righteousness; so thou also descending into the water, and being in a manner buried with him, as he was in the rock, art raised again, walking in newness of life."

Strikingly similar is the representation given by the most distinguished Pedobaptist writers of modern times.

The celebrated Turrettin admits that "as in former times, the persons to be baptized were immersed in the water, continued under the water, and emerged out of it, (Mat. 3: 16; Acts 8: 38;) so the old man died in them and was buried, and the new man arose. (Rom. 6: 4; Col 2: 12.)"

Witsius. "Baptism represents those benefits both present and future, which believers obtain in Christ. Among the present benefits, the principal is, communion with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; and, which is consequent upon it, the mortification and

burial of our old, and resurrection of the new man, in virtue of the blood and Spirit of Christ."

Grotius. "There was in baptism as administered in former times, an image both of a burial and of a resurrection; which in respect to Christ, was external; in regard to christians, internal. (Rom. 6: 4.)"

Archbishop Leighton. "Rom. 6: 4,—where the dipping into water is referred to, as representing our dying with Christ, the return thence, as expressive of our rising with him."

Dr. Chalmers. "Jesus Christ by death underwent this sort of baptism,—even immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation; in the act of descending under the water of baptism, to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second, or a new life." Remarks on Rom. 6: 3–7.

SECTION VI.

THE SIGNIFICANCY OF BAPTISM AS REFERRING TO THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

We proceed to show that the symbolical language of baptism has also reference to THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. This fact is clearly brought to view in the passages already quoted. The subject of baptism is not merely buried, he professes to be buried *with Christ*, to be baptized into *his* death, or into conformity to *him* with respect to death. He is planted *in the likeness of his death.* Rom. 6: 3–5. He rises *with him.* He declares his faith in the power that

raised him from the dead. Col. 2: 12. Baptism is to him the answer of a good conscience towards God, as it is connected with *the resurrection of Christ.* 1 Pet. 3: 21. He thus, in being baptized, distinctly recognizes the fact that Jesus has died, and risen again, and that *on this account* he has been enabled to die to sin, and to rise to newness of life. He professes his obligation to be spiritually conformed to the death and resurrection of his Lord.

The great facts which lie at the foundation of Christianity, and which are the only ground of our hope of salvation, are thus, whenever the ordinance is properly observed, distinctly presented to view. The symbol is such as to point us directly to the fact that Jesus has been delivered to death for our offences, and that he has risen again for our justification, and now lives to intercede for us, to reign in his church, and finally to judge the world in righteousness. Rom. 4: 25; Heb. 7: 25; Rev. 1: 18; Acts 17: 31.

The design of baptism as thus exhibited was universally understood by the early Christians.

Ignatius, in an epistle to the church in Thallia, says, "Baptism was given to set forth the death of our Lord."

Justin Martyr, A. D. 140. "We represent our Lord's sufferings and resurrection by baptism in a pool."

Apostolic Constitutions, A. D. 300. "Baptism was given to represent the death of Christ."

Basil. "There is but one death for the world, and one resurrection from the dead, of which baptism is a type."

These passages are not adduced as authority in determining the significancy of baptism. They are chiefly interesting as indicating that the views of the Christians upon this point during the apostolic and suc-

ceeding ages, were in accordance with the teaching of the the New Testament. The fact so clearly brought to view in Col. 2: 12; Rom. 6: 3–5, that in baptism there is an emblematical profession of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, appears to have been, in those early times, universally understood and acknowledged.

In the preceding pages we have endeavored to present the design of baptism in its true scriptural light. Thus viewed the ordinance is peculiarly significant. The great moral change of which the christian is the subject, is represented by the most expressive emblems which could be selected; and in such a manner as to recognize the great facts in the Christian system to which this change is attributable. Hence whenever the inquiry is made of the disciples of Christ, as was of the Jews in reference to the passover, "What mean ye by this service?" their appropriate answer is,—Our Divine Master for our sakes submitted to death, entered the grave, and rose again from the dead, and we thus profess our *conformity to him* as his disciples. We signify not only that we have been *washed* from our sins, but that we have become *dead* to sin and the world, and have *risen* to the enjoyment and pursuit of a new and holy life.

CHAPTER II.

THE FORM OF BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM ANSWERED ONLY BY IMMERSION. ITS ENTIRE SIGNIFICANCY MUST BE PRESERVED.

In the preceding chapter we have examined somewhat fully the design and significancy of baptism, as exhibited in the New Testament. This examination, as before intimated, will assist us in arriving at a satisfactory conclusion respecting the *form*, the *subjects*, the *authority*, and the *relative position* of the ordinance. Let its design as a symbolical institution be fully perceived and appreciated, and the confusion and diversity of sentiment prevalent on these several points, will, for the most part, cease to exist. Whatever be the views entertained of the ordinance in other respects, it will be admitted, at least, that nothing can be a valid observance of it, that fails of fulfilling its design and preserving its significancy. We accordingly proceed to inquire, in the first place, What does the design of baptism teach us with respect to

THE ACT ENJOINED?

In entering upon an examination of this point, we observe at once, that the facts presented in the preceding sections, if duly considered, will directly and un-

avoidably, we are constrained to believe, lead to the conclusion that nothing is valid baptism but *immersion in water*. As a symbolical ordinance cannot be rightly observed, cannot in fact exist, where its significancy is wanting; so in nothing short of immersion does the significancy of baptism appear.

Baptism we have shown was designed to be a symbol of *death and resurrection*. When the subject is laid beneath the water, there is a resemblance of submission to death. He is hid from the view of the world. He is actually buried in a liquid grave. In emerging he enters a new element; he seems to come forth to a new state of existence; and he thus signifies that like as Christ rose from the dead, so he has risen to walk in newness of life. More appropriate and forcible emblems could not have been selected. In any application of water short of immersion this significancy is not preserved. No one pretends that in sprinkling, for example, there is a representation of death and resurrection, in respect either to Christ, or his disciples. Whatever be the meaning attached to such a transaction, it fails most obviously in expressing the symbolical import of baptism.

Is it said, that although sprinkling does not preserve the significancy of the ordinance in every respect, it nevertheless does *in part?* we reply,

1. The design of the ordinance cannot be met while *any* essential part of its significancy is omitted. This proposition can be presented in a light so clear and obvious, that its correctness, we think, must be perceived and admitted. The primary design of the Jewish passover was to commemorate the deliverance of the Israelites, recorded in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. There was also a secondary reference to the mediation of

Christ. Now had the Jews confined their observance of the rite to those parts which served especially to represent their own deliverance, omitting whatever referred more directly to the sacrifice of Christ,—compare Ex. 12: 5, 46; 1 Pet. 1: 19; John 19: 33, 36,—would the design of the rite have been answered? or the will of the Lawgiver obeyed? Would they have been excused by alleging that the substance was preserved, that its primary design, and the only design specified in its institution, (see Ex. 12,) was met? Such liberty with the ordinances of religion would anciently have been considered daring presumption.

Take another illustration. The Lord's supper is designed to be a means of commemorating the sufferings of Christ, of *showing forth his death* as the ground of our redemption. This is the only point pertaining to its design specified at its institution. The language of Christ to his disciples is, "Do this in *remembrance of me.*" "This is my body that is *broken for you.*" "This is my blood that is *shed* for the *remission of sins.*" The significancy of the ordinance in these respects would appear were simply the bread to be broken, the wine to be poured forth, and the worshippers by some act, such as the reception of the elements into their hands, to indicate their dependence on the thing represented, for salvation. Christ would thus be set forth as the object of their faith, as one who has been crucified and has shed his blood on their behalf. But would this fulfill the design of the ordinance? It might represent an interest in Christ in one important light, the light in which he is presented to view in Mat. 26: 26–28; Luke 22: 19, 20; 1 Cor. 11: 24–28, 29; but it would fail of representing it in another light; as it is presented in 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17; where

christians are described as "*partakers* of that one bread."

Now should it be contended that it is not necessary to eat the bread, and to drink of the cup,—as the Romanists actually do with respect to the latter,—that the significancy of the ordinance, as far as is indicated in its original institution, and as far as its essence is concerned, may be preserved without it, how could the correctness of the position be called in question, without at the same time admitting that the design of baptism cannot be met when one important part of its significancy is omitted? If the proper observance of the Lord's supper requires us to exhibit Christ, not merely as a sacrifice for sin to whom we look, or on whom we depend, for pardon and salvation, but also as the source of our spiritual *nourishment*, as one of whose blessings we *partake*, no argument is requisite to show that the ordinance of baptism cannot properly be observed where all reference to dying to sin and rising to newness of life, all allusion to the death and resurrection of Christ, is wanting in the symbol. If in one case the *entire* significancy of the ordinance is essential to its validity, the same is equally and obviously true in the other. But,

2. That part of the significancy of baptism which is confessedly omitted in any transaction short of immersion, is the *most prominent* and *expressive*, and judging from the representation of the New Testament, we might conclude, the *most important*. This alone is referred to by the apostles when speaking of baptism and its uses in their epistles. This alone is appealed to by the sacred writers in illustration of the obligation which baptism recognizes as resting on its subjects. And except for the incidental allusion in Acts 22:

16, we might look in vain for scriptural testimony to refute the position, that in this is included the entire significancy of the ordinance. Now were any part of its symbolical import to be disregarded, this certainly should be preserved.

Is it suggested, that sprinkling, however deficient in significancy, may, nevertheless, be observed as a means of professing death and resurrection? The principle involved in such a position we shall have occasion to consider hereafter. We simply observe at present, that it entirely overlooks the design of baptism as a symbolical institution. We might with equal propriety adopt any other ceremony, Jewish, Pagan, or Papistical, and call it baptism, or the Lord's supper, and observe it for the purposes for which these institutions were established. This, however, would be, *not observing*, but *setting aside*, the ordinances of the gospel, and substituting the inventions of men in their stead.

SECTION II.

NO PART OF THE SIGNIFICANCY OF BAPTISM PRESERVED IN SPRINKLING.

Our argument in the preceding section was accommodated to the assumption that the significancy of baptism may be preserved *in part* in sprinkling. We shall now endeavor to show that this assumption is groundless. Sprinkling sets aside the significancy of baptism *entirely*. It preserves *no part* of its symbolical import.

Baptism, we have shown, represents, in addition to death and resurrection, the *washing away of sin*. In sprinkling, however, no such representation appears.

For although among the Jews sprinkling was employed in rites of purification, it was not a mode of washing. The terms in the original scriptures by which the two ideas are expressed, are as definite and distinct in their signification, as in the English language. This distinction is sufficiently apparent in Lev. 6: 27. "When there is *sprinkled* of the blood thereof on any garment, thou shalt *wash* that whereon it was *sprinkled* in the holy place." See also Lev. 14: 7, 8. President Beecher, in his articles on baptism, in the Biblical Repository, has presented this point in a peculiarly clear and forcible light. Alluding to the description which Josephus gives of certain Jewish rites in which sprinkling was required, he says, "He not only *omits washing*, but he so describes the purification of the people as to imply that *washing was no part of the rite.*" "Now if it was necessary to *wash also*, then it is not true that after *sprinkling only* they were clean, for *washing still remained.*" Again he says, "Paul also (Heb. 9: 13,) says *nothing of a washing*, but speaks of *sprinkling as the whole.*" Biblical Repository, No. 41, p. 43. It is admitted, therefore, that "sprinkling only," neither expresses nor implies the idea of washing. Hence *it is not possible, in the nature of the case, that it should represent the washing away of sin.*

Is it urged, that sprinkling though not a symbol of the washing away of sin, is nevertheless not without significancy? that it represents essentially the same thing under another figure? that it is significant of "the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience?" that it is adapted to the figure by which the removal of sin is indicated in Ezek. 36: 25? We reply, the same position in general might be assumed in favor of any

other transaction adapted to represent a spiritual change. We might on the same ground select any other figure employed in the Scriptures to describe repentance and forgiveness of sin; and adopting some ceremony corresponding thereto, we might designate it baptism, and observe it as such. Because it is said Isa. 43: 25, "I am he that *blotteth out* thy transgressions," and the injunction is given Acts 3: 19, "Repent and be converted that your sins may be *blotted out*," we might assume that the design of baptism is sufficiently met in some act expressive of *blotting out*. Nor would those who contend on the ground now under consideration, that sprinkling is baptism, be able to deny the soundness of the conclusion. It cannot be denied that such an act would be significant, that it would be conformed to the representation of various passages of scripture, that it would express, under another form, what is expressed in baptism. And its validity as baptism could be called in question, only by admitting that *sprinkling* has no claim on any such grounds to be considered a gospel ordinance.

Again, the communication of spiritual blessings is described in the Scriptures as *an anointing;* and the "baptism of the Spirit," is in reality nothing else than what is styled under another figure "the *unction* [the anointing] of the Holy One." What hinders, therefore, that we adopt some ceremony of *anointing*, and observe it in the place of baptism? As many considerations certainly could be urged in its favor, as can be adduced to show that the design of baptism is met in sprinkling.

If these are not parallel cases we are unable to perceive where the analogy fails. It is impossible to escape the conclusion, either that a ceremony of blot-

ting out, or of anointing, or any other similarly significant act, would be valid baptism, or that the position that sprinkling is baptism because it is significant, and represents the change involved in conversion in accordance with scriptural figures of speech, is untenable, and ought to be abandoned.

But sprinkling, it is urged, is significant of *purification.* This, however, it will be recollected, is not the point at issue. Baptism, as we have shown, is no where in the New Testament described as a symbol simply of purification. It represents specifically the washing away of sin.

The position assumed is, that baptism denotes purification, and that any form of purification is adapted to answer its design. The fallacy of this position can easily be made apparent. Is it admitted that an act significant of *refining*, for example, would be valid as baptism? Is it conceded that the practice ascribed to certain ancient heretical sects, of using *fire* for the purpose of baptizing, and in defence of which, it is said, they appealed to such passages as Mat. 3: 11, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with *fire*," was obedience to the law of baptism? Would a ceremony of *anointing*, like those employed in the Jewish purifications,—see Lev. 14: 28, 29,—be accepted as the initiatory rite of Christianity? These, it cannot be denied, might be used as symbols of purification; and their sufficiency to fulfill the design of baptism must either be admitted, *or the ground that any form of purification is adapted to answer that purpose, must be abandoned.* It is impossible to avoid this conclusion.

But, it will be urged, perhaps, that the history of the institution recorded in the New Testament, indicates

that the use of *water* is essential to its validity. This we cannot but regard as an important admission. It is, as will be perceived, an actual abandonment of the position whose fallacy we are endeavoring to expose. To maintain that water is requisite in baptism, is to concede that any form of purification will not suffice.* *Washing*, it is true, in the ordinary conceptions of men, implies the use of water; but not purification. It is as natural to associate purification with the action of *fire*, as of water. Among the Jews it was connected with the offering of sacrifices, and the application of *blood*. See also Lev. 14: 28, 29; Mat. 3: 12.

Now are the advocates of the position under consideration willing to admit that the use of fire, or of any other material by which purification might be indicated, would be valid as baptism? Were a sect of Christians to adopt some such practice in preference to the ceremonies now used for baptism, would they be acknowledged as persons regularly baptized? Their submission to a rite significant of purification could not be disputed; and nothing more on the principle assumed in the position under consideration, is required.

It will be impossible, we conceive, in the light of these suggestions to maintain, that baptism simply de-

*It is also an admission on the part of Pedobaptists, that in ascertaining the will of Christ with respect to baptism, we are to look, not to the design of the ordinance simply, but also to the history of its institution, and the example of the apostles. If this be true with respect to *the material to be used*, may we not with equal, or still stronger reason believe it true with respect to *the act to be performed*? Is it not obviously the duty of christians in reference to *both*, to "keep the ordinances *as they were delivered*?"

notes purification, and that the mode by which it is signified, is of no importance; that one form of purification is equally valid with another. The application of this principle in its full extent, as pointed out in our preceding remarks, must be acceded to, or the position must be abandoned. We repeat it, there is no other alternative.

It has been shown that the New Testament no where speaks of baptism as indicative specifically of purification. But even were such the fact, it would by no means follow that any form of purification would suffice to meet its design. We should still be required, without some express intimation to the contrary, to consider baptism a symbol of purification only as it represents the washing away of sin. The principle involved in this statement, can be illustrated by examples in which its correctness will not, cannot be doubted.

Baptism is usually described as "a sign of the remission of sin;" in proof of which reference is made to Mark 1: 4; Acts 2: 38. But is it inferred on the ground of this fact, that any transaction by which remission may be represented, will suffice to answer the design of baptism? Is the conclusion drawn, that, because sin is described in the Scriptures as being blotted out, covered, cast away, &c., a ceremony adapted to represent its remission in accordance with any of these several figures of speech, may properly be observed as the initiatory ordinance of the gospel? Such a ceremony would certainly be a symbol of the remission of sin. But we readily perceive that it is not in this light that the idea of remission is related to baptism. It is significant of remission only as it represents

the washing away of sin. The same principle would obviously apply, on the supposition that baptism were described in the New Testament as a sign of purification. *We might as well adopt any symbol of remission, as of purification.*

Take another illustration. Baptism, it is said, represents the communication of the Holy Spirit's influences, commonly identified with what is styled "the baptism of the Spirit." But will it be admitted by those who take this position, that *any* act by which the impartation or reception of the Spirit might be represented, would answer the purpose of baptism? If so, they must admit that this would be true of *anointing*, 1 John 2: 27; of an *emission of the breath*, John 20: 22; and especially of the *reception of water internally.* No figure is more frequently employed in the New Testament to describe the reception of the Spirit's influences, than that of *drinking;* and in one instance it is introduced in immediate connexion with baptism. "For by one Spirit are we all *baptized* into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to *drink* into one Spirit." 1 Cor. 12: 18. See also John 7: 37; 4: 14. And we might contend on the strength of this representation, that the use of water in drinking, to express the act of "drinking into one Spirit," or a ceremony of anointing, to represent the "unction of the Holy One," would be "scriptural modes of baptism." The fallacy of this reasoning, would, in such a case, readily be discovered. It would at once be urged that while baptism is significant of the communication of the Spirit's influences, it becomes so through the medium of some other emblem than those of drink-

ing or anointing.* And it would be equally fallacious, were baptism represented in the New Testament as significant of purification, to infer that any form of purification might be adopted at pleasure. Baptism would then, as now, be significant of purification only as a symbol of the washing away of sin.

But there is another light in which this point may be presented. If baptism, as we have so fully shown in the preceding sections, is a symbol of the washing away of sin, it is *not possible*, in the nature of the case, that it should represent purification in any sense that does not include the idea of washing. *It cannot leave out of view that which at the same time it represents.* And hence as there is confessedly no representation of washing in sprinkling, or anointing, or an act significant of refining, it is impossible that these should represent the washing away of sin. They might, indeed, represent the sprinkling of the heart from an evil conscience, the purging of the soul from the dross of sin, the consecration involved in the unction of the Spirit; but these are ideas in no way connected with the significancy of baptism. Its symbolical import is simple and specific. It is emblematical of the washing away of sin; and in no transaction indicative either of purification, or of remission, in which this specific emblem does not appear, is the significancy of the ordinance preserved.

To set aside the emblems selected by Christ, and adopt others in their stead, on pretence that the same

*The same remark will apply to the figures of *pouring* and *shedding*, used Ps. 72: 6, Isa. 44: 3, etc. These equally with those of *drinking* and *anointing*, &c., are entirely foreign to the significancy of baptism. For an explanation of the figure "the baptism of the Spirit," see note C, Appendix.

general facts may be represented, is to set aside the institutions of Christ, and substitute in their place other rites. It is not assumed that a ceremony expressive of the blotting out of sin, the covering of sin, the purging away the dross of sin, the sprinkling of the heart from an evil conscience, the unction of the Holy One, or the act of drinking into one Spirit, would be destitute of significancy. But it is obvious no such ceremony could represent the *washing* away of sin.

It thus appears that in no ceremony commonly designated baptism, except immersion, is the significancy of the ordinance preserved *in any respect.* In sprinkling, for example, not merely the most conspicuous part, but the *whole* of its symbolical import, is wanting. That such a transaction does not represent spiritual death and resurrection, conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ, is conceded. That it does not represent the washing of regeneration, or the washing away of sin, is equally apparent. This affords an interesting confirmation of the position established in the preceding section, that the design of baptism can be answered only by immersion in water. In this, the washing away of sin, and conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ, are both exhibited in striking emblems. In no other ceremony called baptism, is *either* represented. It will be impossible, we think, on a proper consideration of this fact, to mistake the nature of the ordinance. The will of the Lawgiver with respect to the act to be performed, appears conspicuous in the very design of the institution.

SECTION III.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD.

THE correctness of the conclusion arrived at in the preceding sections with respect to the *act required* in baptism, is, if possible, still more evident from THE MEANING OF THE WORD.

The lexicographers of the Greek language are united in declaring that *to baptize is to immerse. Baptizo*, the word uniformly employed by the sacred writers to denote the act of Christian baptism, has but one distinct and general signification, expressed, it is true, in different connexions by different terms, as, to immerse, to submerge, to plunge, to dip, to overwhelm.*

That this is its true and proper meaning is confirmed by *the testimony of the most eminent and learned Pedobaptist scholars and divines* of the present and former ages.

Martin Luther says, "The term baptism is a Greek word; it may be rendered into Latin by *mersio* (*immersion*); as when we *immerse* any thing in water that it may be *entirely covered* with water."—"They ought to be wholly immersed, and immediately drawn out again, for the etymology of the word seems to require it."

Calvin. "The word baptize signifies *to immerse;* and the right of immersion was observed in the ancient church."

Beza. "Christ commanded us to be baptized, by which word it is certain *immersion* is signified."

Dr. George Campbell. "The word baptizein, both

* Note D, Appendix.

in sacred authors and in classical, signifies *to dip, to plunge, to immerse.* It is always construed suitably to this meaning."

Augusti. "The word baptism, according to etymology and usage, signifies, *to immerse, to submerge*, &c.; and the choice of the word betrays an age in which the later custom of sprinkling, had not been introduced."

Dr. Knapp. "Baptizein properly signifies *to immerse, to dip in*, like the German *taufen, to wash by immersion.*"

Dr. Chalmers. "The original meaning of the word baptism is *immersion.*"

On these explicit declarations from men of the highest distinction for learning and influence in the Pedobaptist ranks—and the list, were it necessary, might be greatly enlarged—comment is needless. Is it objected to the use made of these quotations, that they are the language of *Pedobaptists*, who, of course, believed that sprinkling would suffice for the purpose of baptism? This we have admitted. And it is this fact which gives our argument its peculiar force. For whatever their attempts to justify the practice of their own churches, their testimony with regard to the meaning of the word, is only thereby rendered the more valuable and decisive.

To enable the reader, however, to judge for himself respecting its proper import, we shall introduce a few examples of its use as it occurs in ancient Greek authors.

Pindar, a celebrated Greek poet, expresses himself thus, "As when a net is cast into the sea, the cork *swims* above, *so* I am *unbaptized.*"

Strabo, a cotemporary of the apostles, speaking of a

lake in Sicily, says, "Things that elsewhere will not float, do not become *baptized* (do not sink) in the waters of this lake, but *swim* like wood."

Josephus, the Jewish historian, describing an engagement between the Jews and Romans, on the lake of Genesereth, says the former, "when they ventured to come near the Romans, were *baptized* (submerged) together with their ships;" and adds, "If any of those who had been *baptized*, *raised their heads out of the water*, they were either killed by the darts, or caught by the vessels."

In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, baptizo is used in 2d Kings 5: 14, as a translation of the Hebrew *tabal*, which, it is universally admitted, means to dip or immerse. "And Naaman went down and *dipped* himself seven times in Jordan."

The same usage appears in the Christian Fathers. A single example from Gregory Nazianzen must suffice. "Let us not load ourselves with a heavier burden than we can bear, lest we be *baptized* (submerged) with the ship and crew."

Examples of this kind might be greatly multiplied. But these will suffice to show in what sense the word baptize was used by those who anciently employed the Greek language. They teach us, that not merely pagan Greeks, but Jewish and Christian writers, those familiar with all the rites of Judaism and Christianity, those even who practiced Christian baptism, regarded the word as having, like every other, a definite meaning, *as designating a specific action;* and that action they have declared to be *immersion.*

The import of the command, "Arise and be *baptized*," may, therefore, be considered settled. It is, properly expressed, a command to be *immersed.* Had

Christ or his apostles used the term baptize in some new, or even unusual sense, their meaning would not have been apprehended; or rather, they would have enjoined, according to the established import of the word, one thing, while in reality they intended another, failing to employ the appropriate terms to express it. Words denoting external acts do not change their signification simply because they are applied to religious transactions. When Moses is said to have *sprinkled* the blood of the sacrifices for the purpose of making atonement, the term employed denotes to sprinkle no less than if it had been used in any other connexion. When Christ commanded his disciples, in instituting the ordinance of the Supper, to *eat* and to *drink*, he obviously used these terms in their usual acceptation. And when he requires his followers to be *baptized*, that is, *immersed*, in water, on profession of faith in him, the import of the command is as definite and as obvious as though immersion in water for any other purpose were required.

It may not be amiss, however, to inquire, Is any additional light cast upon the meaning of the word, by *its use as applied directly to the ordinance of Christian baptism?* The answer to this inquiry, while it may serve to confirm the position already established, will also have the effect to meet an argument much relied on by certain Pedobaptist writers, founded on what they are pleased to style "the sacred use of the term."

In our investigation of this point we must rely especially on proof furnished by the New Testament, and by writers who were either cotemporary with the apostles, or their immediate successors. The word baptism after being appropriated for centuries to the initiatory ordinance of Christianity, would naturally come

to be used chiefly as a technical term,—as a simple name of the rite; and as such it would express, not the form of the rite only, but its object, its uses, and whatever else might be supposed to pertain to it. And it could hardly fail that it would frequently be used in connexions where its proper signification would be left entirely out of view. Especially might this be expected after a variety of superstitious doctrines and rites became connected with the ordinance, and the ceremony of affusion was in some special cases substituted for a proper baptism. For illustration we need simply refer to the customary use of *taufen* the word in the German language appropriated to Christian baptism, and properly signifying, according to the testimony of the most distinguished German scholars, *to dip, to immerse.** Compare also the use of the Dutch *doopen*, the Swedish *dopa*, and the Danish *dobe*.

Examples in which the Christian Fathers may have used the word baptism in a manner inconsistent with the idea of immersion, are, consequently, of no authority in determining its meaning when it became appropriated to the Christian ordinance, or as used by Christ and his apostles. Most, if not all the instances in which such examples may be claimed, at least from the earlier Christian writers, are referable to what Mr. Beecher styles, the use of the term "as the appropriated name of the rite of Christian baptism." "In this case," says Mr. Beecher, "it approximates in its use, toward a proper name, or a technical term, i. e. the attention of the mind is abstracted from the meaning of the word, though it is in fact significant, and is fixed upon the rite for which it stands." Mr. Beecher even

* Adelung's Dictionary, Luther's Sermon on Baptism, Knapp's Theology, Vol. 2, p. 510.

admits that "what would be incongruous uses, if referred to the sense merely, are not so if referred to the rite." Attention to this admitted principle,—which is certainly expressed in as strong terms as could be desired,—is all that is necessary to show the groundlessness of the assumption that the Christian Fathers used the term baptism with various significations.* It will account for the fact that they sometimes compare baptism, that is, the rite designated by that name, with certain Jewish rites, which however unlike in form, were yet conceived to be in many respects of similar import. On the same principle they compare the ordinance of the Supper, with institutions enjoined in the Old Testament, as the passover; although in the manner of their observance, and in the signification of the terms by which they were usually designated, they were very dissimilar. Nor is there any difficulty in the fact that they familiarly designated baptism by a variety of appellations, as initiation, illumination, regeneration, remission, purification, etc. The *rite* on account of something pertaining to its nature or its effects, they conceived might properly be designated by each of these terms. But it would be idle to contend that they considered the *word* as having so many diverse and disconnected *significations*. This would involve a contradiction.

It is certain, however, that they customarily employed the word when applied to Christian baptism in the specific sense of *immersion*. Chrysostom, commenting on Mark 10: 59, says, "He calls his cross baptism, for as we are easily *baptized* (immersed), and rise again, so he having died, easily rose again when he would." Again, after alluding to the supposed nature

* Beecher's Articles on Baptism, § 63 and 64.

or effect of baptism as a rite of purification, he says, "As he who is *baptized* (immersed) in water, rises with great ease, being nothing hindered by the nature of the waters, so he having descended into death rose again with ease; for this reason he calls it [his submission to death] baptism." These passages, which are simply specimens of many that might be adduced,* are quoted by Mr. Beecher, and admitted by him to be examples of the use of the term baptize in the sense, to immerse. They may be regarded a sufficient index to its customary use among the Christian Fathers. If the phrase "baptized in water," as used by Chrysostom, means "immersed in water," as Mr. Beecher himself translates it, we may, even without further evidence, safely conclude that it is to be taken in the same sense, as used by his cotemporaries. They, beyond all doubt, regarded the word as signifying properly to immerse. And any examples that may be adduced as instances of inconsistent usage may easily be referred to the technical use of the term. If established as such they would no more avail in determining its use in the New Testament, than does the present usage with respect to the German *taufen*, and the

* In a brief examination of the writings of the Christian Fathers, the author has noticed that examples of the use of Βαπτίζω (baptizo) in the sense to immerse, equally interesting and decisive with those here adduced, are of frequent occurrence. Among these are the passages presented in Note C of the Appendix, as also the quotations from Basil and Chrysostom, on page 36. Indeed their customary use, when speaking of Christian baptism, of such expressions as, "we are baptized *into water*," Βαπτιζόμεθα εἰς ὕδωρ, (Basil, De Spiritu Sancto, chap. 15), or "*in the water*," ἐν τῷ ὕδατι, or "*in the waters*," ἐν τοῖς ὕδασιν, ought in itself to suffice for every purpose of conviction. To suppose they intended to say—*sprinkled or purified into water*, would be absurd. *Immersed into water*, or *in the waters*, is the only meaning that can possibly be attached to their language.

Dutch *doopen*, determine the sense in which these terms were used at the time they became appropriated to the ordinance of Christian baptism.*

In further confirmation of the position under consideration, we appeal to the manner in which the word baptizo was *translated by the primitive Christians into other languages.* Among all the translations of the New Testament made previously to the eighth century, it is never rendered by any term that does not express immersion.†

In the Old Syriac version, executed as early as the beginning of the second century, baptism is expressed by a derivative of *amad.* The same term is also used in a sense connected with baptistery, and in John 5: 2–7, is put for *pool:*—"I have no man to put me into the *pool.*" The verb *amad* employed as the translation of baptizo, is defined by Buxtorf in his Chaldee and Syriac Lexicon thus, *to baptize, to dip, to bathe.* Schindler gives as its meaning, *to baptize, to immerse into water, to dip, to bathe.* Beza also remarks that it properly means *to immerse*, and never to wash except as a consequence of immersion. It is used in the Syriac translation of the Old Testament in Num. 31: 23, to express the act of *putting into water.* Com. Lev. 11: 32. It is used by Ephraim Syrus of the fourth century to express the immersion of Christ in the Jordan. "How wonderful is it that thy footsteps were planted on the waters; that the great sea should subject itself to thy feet; and that yet at a small river that same

* Note E. Appendix.

† For the facts here stated in reference to the early translations, the author is indebted chiefly to "a Critical Examination of the rendering of the word Βαπτίζω in the ancient and many of the modern versions of the New Testament," by F. W. Gotch, of Trinity College, Dublin.

head of thine should be subjected to be bowed down and *baptized* in it!" Here the *head* of the Redeemer is represented as being *bowed down* and *thus baptized in the river.* This is contrasted with the sea being subjected to his feet. As the waters were beneath his feet, so his head was placed *beneath* the water: and this is expressed by the verb *amad.* Any sense but immersion is, of course, entirely precluded. This, let it be borne in mind, is the word which was selected, as early as the beginning of the second century, to express in the Jews' vernacular tongue the meaning of baptizo as it occurs in the New Testament.

In the ancient Egyptian or Coptic version of the New Testament, made during the third century, baptizo is translated by a term which signifies, *to immerse, to submerge, to sink.* It is used in many passages not relating to the ordinance of baptism, which will be to all a sufficient index to its meaning; as Mat. 18: 6,—"*submerged* in the depths of the sea;" Mat. 14: 30,—"and beginning to *sink*, he cried, saying, Lord save me."

In the Gothic version, executed in the fourth century, the term employed as a translation of baptizo, is *daupjan*, from which is derived our word *dip*, and which it is universally admitted means properly, *to dip, to immerse.*

These examples are sufficient to illustrate the sense in which baptizo was understood by the ancient translators of the New Testament. In no instance for more than seven centuries was it translated by any term that did not involve the idea of immersion. The evidence furnished by this fact, we think, is irresistible. Here were men perfectly familiar with the Greek language as it was used by the apostles, some of them living

almost in the apostolic age; they wish to express in the languages of the nations where the gospel had been introduced, the meaning of the word baptize; and they invariably select terms denoting immersion. They thus declare in the most direct and explicit manner that this was its import as employed in the New Testament. They declare that Christ commanded his disciples to "go and disciple all nations, *immersing* them;"—that he requires those who hear the message of the gospel, to "repent and be *immersed.*" We can scarcely conceive of proof more direct or more decisive for establishing the meaning of the term baptism, as applied in the New Testament to the initiatory ordinance of the gospel.

But it is unnecessary, in order to establish this point, that we go beyond the *New Testament.*

The meaning of baptizo is sufficiently apparent from 1 Cor. 10: 1, 2. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were *under the cloud,* and all *passed through the sea;* and were all *baptized* unto Moses *in the cloud* and *in the sea.*" The Israelites in descending into the bed of the sea, while the water surrounded them on all sides, and the cloud hung over their heads, were literally *immersed.* That this is what the apostle intended to express in saying that they were baptized, is evident from the nature of his phraseology, as well as from his particular description of their condition. He is drawing an analogy between incidents connected with their history, and facts pertaining to the Christian church. And the only satisfactory reason that can be assigned for his noticing the fact that the Israelites were *under the cloud,* and *passed through the sea,* is, that he wished thus to prepare the way for the succeeding declaration,

by showing *how they were baptized.* It is in this respect alone that the circumstance can be compared directly with any thing relating to the experience of christians. And hence it is further stated, that "they were baptized *in the cloud and in the sea.*" This is precisely the phraseology to correspond with the idea of immersion; and we cannot conceive why it should be employed for any other purpose. That which not merely *passes through*, but is *in* and *under* watery elements, is necessarily *immersed;* and the very representation shows that immersion is the idea *intended* to be expressed.

Examples still more decisive, if possible, are found in Mat. 20: 22, 23; Mark 10: 38, 39; Luke 12: 50; where the Saviour compares his sufferings and death to baptism. "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"—"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." That in these passages the term baptism is figuratively used in the sense of immersion or overwhelming is generally, if not universally, admitted. It describes, in accordance with a usage common to most languages, the depth or overwhelming nature of the Saviour's sufferings. See Ps. 69: 2; 42: 7. The meaning is expressed by Dr. Doddridge thus,—"I shall be shortly bathed, as it were, in blood, and plunged in the most overwhelming distress." Dr. Bloomfield, commenting on Mat. 20: 22, says, "This metaphor, of immersion in water, as expressive of being overwhelmed by affliction, is frequent both in the Scriptural and Classical writers." Even President Beecher admits that the term is used in these instances "in the sense, to overwhelm with cares and agony of body and mind."

It only remains, therefore, in order to establish the point now under consideration, that we show that in these passages there is an allusion to Christian baptism, or that the sufferings of Christ are compared with the act required by that ordinance. And to decide this point we shall appeal directly to *the nature of the phraseology*. This can be accounted for only on the ground that the figure introduced is in some way identified with Christian baptism. It implies that Christ compares his sufferings to some *specific act* with which his disciples were *familiar*, and concerning which *similar phraseology was customarily employed.* Otherwise, why should he speak of *a baptism* which he was to experience?—such a use of the noun *baptisma*, would obviously be unnatural, if not unprecedented. Why does he represent his disciples as being *baptized with* this *baptism?* Why say, "I *have* a baptism?" and especially, "I have a baptism to be *baptized with?*" Had he intended merely to convey the simple idea that he was about to be overwhelmed with sufferings or immersed in affliction, irrespectively of any allusion to Christian baptism, it is unaccountable that he should have said, "I *have an overwhelming* to be *overwhelmed with;*" or, "Are ye able to be *immersed* with the *immersion* that I am *immersed with?*" Such phraseology would be without a parallel in any language ancient or modern. But on the admission that Christ compares his sufferings to the act required of his disciples in Christian baptism, all is natural and lucid; the language is not only appropriate, but peculiarly forcible; —as if he had said, 'Have you been the subjects of an immersion unto repentance? Have you been immersed on profession of your faith in me? I, too, have an immersion to be immersed with, and how am I strait-

ened till it be accomplished. Are ye able to be immersed with the immersion that I am immersed with? an immersion in suffering, agony, and death?'

It is also worthy of notice, that inasmuch as the disciples had been accustomed to hear the phraseology employed in these passages used with reference to the rite of baptism,—com. Luke 7: 29; Acts 19: 3, 4,—they would naturally conclude that it was used in the same sense in these instances. "To be baptized with the baptism of John," "to be baptized with the baptism of repentance," &c., were expressions with which they were familiar. And, without some express intimation to the contrary, they would inevitably infer, in hearing their Master speak of having a baptism to be baptized with, that the language was used in the same general acceptation, as in other cases. This was the light in which it was uniformly understood by the Christian Fathers; and this, we doubt not, is the first, and almost irresistible, impression made on the mind of every reader of the New Testament.

In these passages, then, it is conceded the figure of an immersion or overwhelming is introduced: baptizo is figuratively used in the sense of immerse or overwhelm. This fact being admitted, (and without the admission it is not possible to explain the language,) the point under consideration will in most minds be decided. It will be impossible to convince the mass of reflecting minds that there is no allusion in these passages to Christian baptism, or that the terms employed are not used in the same general acceptation as when applied to that ordinance. If, then, the principle laid down by Mr. Beecher, that where allusion is had to Christian baptism, the word baptize must uniformly be taken in the same sense, be correct, (and its correct-

ness is, we think, too obvious to be disputed,) these examples are decisive with respect to its meaning in the New Testament. It must either be denied that in Mat. 20: 22; Luke 12: 50, there is any allusion to baptism as that term was commonly employed by those whom our Lord was addressing; or it must be admitted on Mr. Beecher's own principles, that uniformly in the language of Christ and his apostles to baptize is to immerse. These examples, especially in connexion with 1 Cor. 10: 1, 2, and I may add, Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12; Mark 1: 5; Mat. 3: 6, establish the point beyond all ground of dispute.

SECTION IV.

IMMERSION THE PRACTICE OF THE APOSTLES AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

THE truth of the position, that immersion in water is essential to Christian baptism, is further evident from THE PRACTICE OF THE APOSTLES AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.

That the notices of baptism recorded in the New Testament are descriptive of immersion, is apparent on other grounds than the testimony of the word itself. It is not merely affirmed, in accordance with what we have so fully shown to be the true import of the term, —"and they that believed were *immersed;*" but the circumstances connected with the administration of the ordinance are recorded with such particularity, as in themselves to show that immersion was practiced. It is said of John, that he baptized the people "*in* the river Jordan;"—"that he baptized in Enon, *because*

there was *much water* there." Mark 1: 5; John 3: 23. Of Philip and the Ethiopian it is recorded, that having come to a certain water, "they both *went down into* the water," and baptism having been performed, "they both *came up out of* the water." Acts 8: 36–39. In Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12, christians in general are represented as *buried* by baptism,—a description which necessarily involves immersion, and which may be considered decisive with respect to the practice of the apostolic churches.

Not less decisive is the testimony of *the earliest Christian Fathers.*

Barnabas and Hermas, or the epistles ascribed to them, both represent baptism as being administered in connexion with "going down into the water" and "coming up out of it."

Justin Martyr says that those who believed, were "led to a place where there was water," and "were then *bathed in the water.*" He also speaks of baptism being performed *in a pool.*

Tertullian. "There is no difference whether one is bathed in a sea, or in a pool, in a river, or in a fountain, in a lake, or in a bath. Nor is there any difference between those whom John immersed in the Jordan, and those whom Peter immersed in the Tiber."

Immersion is thus represented as being the uniform practice of the Christians in those early times. Nor is there any evidence or intimation of a departure from this practice until after the sentiment began to be entertained, that the efficacy of baptism was attributable in no small degree to some peculiar sanctifying power supposed to be contained in the water of baptism. As this sentiment prevailed the manner of bringing the

mysterious fluid into contact with the body, would naturally be considered of less importance. And, it might be anticipated, that in cases of supposed necessity, some other mode of applying it than immersion, would be resorted to.*

The first notice of any such innovation,—which consisted in a copious affusion or pouring of water over the body,—occurs about *the middle of the third century*. This, however, was not generally regarded as conferring the full benefits of baptism. Hence it was practiced only in cases of sickness and supposed necessity;—a circumstance which in itself is a sufficient intimation that it was considered a substitute for the *proper observance* of the rite.

About the middle of the third century the query was proposed to Cyprian, the most distinguished African bishop of the age, whether those who had been the subjects of such a transaction, "could be regarded as legitimate Christians, inasmuch as they had not been bathed in the salutary water, but had received affusion." "Cyprian," says the Editor of the Christian Review, "is not prepared to give a decisive answer, but expresses his opinion, and says, each one must settle this question for himself. His own views are stated thus, 'When there is a *pressing necessity* with *God's indulgence*, the holy ordinances, though *outwardly abridged*, confer the entire blessing on those who believe.'" Cyprian thus directly admits that affusion, instead of being appointed or sanctioned by Christ, required a resort to the *indulgence* of God, and

* Prof. Hahn remarks in reference to infant baptism, "It arose from false views of original sin, and of the magical power of consecrated water." The same remark, in part at least, is applicable to the origin of sprinkling.

should be practiced only in cases of *urgent necessity;*—that it was, in fact, "an abridgement" of the original institution: all this, notwithstanding his anxiety to find some ground on which to justify the innovation.

In support of the position that immersion was the practice of the primitive Christians, we might appeal to the testimony of many of the most distinguished Pedobaptist historians and divines of different ages. A single quotation, from the Theological Works of the celebrated Dr. Knapp of Halle, must suffice. His language, as translated by Mr. Woods, is as follows,—"*Immersion* is peculiarly agreeable to the institution of Christ, and to the practice of the apostolical church, and so even John baptized; and immersion remained common for a long time after; except that in the third century, and perhaps earlier, the baptism of the sick, (baptisma clinicorum), was performed by sprinkling or affusion. Still some would not acknowledge this to be true baptism, and controversy arose concerning it,—so unheard of was it at that time to baptize by simple affusion. Cyprian first defended baptism by sprinkling, when necessity called for it; but cautiously, and with much limitation. By degrees, however, this mode of baptism became more customary, probably because it was found more convenient; especially was this the case after the seventh century, and in the Western Church; but it did not become universal until the commencement of the fourteenth century. Yet Thomas Aquinas had approved and promoted this innovation, more than a hundred years before. In the Greek and Eastern Church they still held to immersion. It would have been better to have adhered generally to the ancient practice, as even Luther and Calvin allowed."

What more could any Baptist writer have said? Dr. Knapp, although he attempts in the best manner he is able, to defend the practice of his own church, admits that it is *an innovation*;—that immersion was the practice of John, and of the apostolic churches, and that there is no proof of any exception to this practice, even in case of the sick, until the *third century*;—that previously to this time affusion appears to have been *unheard of*;—that upon its introduction it met with *resistance*, and was at first defended only with *caution* and *much limitation*;—and that even after it began to be allowed in cases of supposed necessity, immersion continued to be the common practice for many centuries. It will be particularly noted, that no proof is claimed for the introduction of affusion, *even in case of the sick*, previously to the third century.

In the light of these facts the notices of affusion which occur in writers of the third and fourth centuries, so far from furnishing any ground for regarding the practice apostolic, present the strongest possible proof to the contrary. The evidence is far more conclusive, than if all allusion to such a practice had been omitted. We not only have it conceded that affusion was an innovation, but the light in which it was viewed upon its introduction, the cases to which it was restricted, and the causes which led to it, are stated, and become constituent parts of the history.

We thus, from a simple examination of the history of the church subsequent to the apostolic age, conclude with a confidence amounting almost to absolute certainty, that immersion was the invariable practice of the first Christians. The same fact is established, while the practice is also shown to be of divine appointment, by the testimony of the New Testament.

In concluding our remarks in relation to the ACT required in Christian baptism, we may be allowed briefly to revert to the several points that have come under examination, reversing the order in which they have been considered. We have shown from the early history of the church, that immersion was the practice of the primitive Christians; and that there is no proof that affusion was resorted to in any case previously to the third century. We have shown that immersion alone is sanctioned by the example of the apostles and their companions, as recorded in the New Testament. We have shown that the very meaning of the word baptize is to *immerse:* and that the express injunction of the Master is, consequently,—"Repent and *be immersed.*" And, in addition to all this, we have shown that nothing short of immersion can fulfill the design of the ordinance as a symbolical institution. No other ceremony called baptism represents the *washing away of sin.* No other, as is universally admitted, is a symbol of spiritual *conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ;* and thus points directly to the great facts which lie at the foundation of the Christian scheme. In any thing but immersion, the significancy of the ordinance is *entirely lost*, by being, either exchanged, or unconditionally set aside.

From what other source could an argument possibly be deduced? The evidence showing immersion to be the will of Christ, is not merely decisive; it is absolutely *complete.* The example of Christ and his apostles, his express injunction to be immersed, and even the very design of his ordinance as a symbolical institution, all, must be disregarded and set aside, or immersion must be practiced.

CHAPTER III.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

BELIEVERS SHOWN TO BE THE ONLY PROPER SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM BY ITS DESIGN.

THE design of baptism properly considered, will decide the question, Who are the PROPER SUBJECTS of the ordinance? It will show that they are such only as give evidence of having cordially embraced the gospel. The idea that the unconverted, and even infants, may be admitted to baptism, could have originated only in erroneous views of its design.

Is the ordinance the appointed means of making a public profession of the Christian religion? Does the individual baptized declare his faith in Christ, his repentance of sin, his change of character? This he cannot do in truth, unless he is a believer, and has actually become changed. Does he "put on Christ," or assume the badge of discipleship, and "answer a good conscience toward God?" This implies that he has chosen Christ for his Master, and is actuated by a conscientious regard for the will of God. Does he express the hope that his sins have been washed away? The only ground on which such a hope can be avowed, is the evidence of an actual change of heart. Does he declare that inasmuch as Christ has been delivered to death for his offences, and raised again for his justification, he has become dead to sin, and has risen to new-

ness of life? Such a state must be enjoyed before it can properly be professed. Baptism administered to infants, or to unconverted adults, utterly fails of meeting the design of the ordinance in any of these respects.

It is a remarkable fact that the practice of Pedobaptist churches in applying baptism to infants, is palpably inconsistent with the design of the ordinance as explained in their own Confessions of faith. By the Presbyterian Church baptism is represented as being to the party baptized, "a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his engrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life." Now to say nothing of the idea expressed by the unscriptural use of the term "seal," it is not a little difficult to perceive how baptism can be to the subject, a sign of his regeneration, of his engrafting into Christ, and of the giving up of himself unto God to walk in newness of life, when the evidence that he has experienced these things is entirely wanting.

It is worthy of notice that not a single use for which baptism was instituted, specified in the New Testament, will apply in the case of infants. They make no profession, acknowledge no obligations, manifest no determination, assume no responsibility, exercise no religious feelings, perform no act whatever. They are merely the passive unaffected subjects of a ceremony which in respect to them can have no scriptural significancy. The design of baptism, in its administration to infants, is accordingly entirely disregarded.

SECTION II.

INFANT BAPTISM OPPOSED TO THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

THE position established in the preceding section, is confirmed by the fact, that *infant baptism is opposed to the nature and design of the gospel dispensation.* The Christian economy in contrast with the Jewish, is distinguished for its *spirituality.*

1. It is eminently spiritual and personal in its *requirements.* This is intimated in the declaration of Christ, John 4: 21–23. "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.—The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." The gospel addresses its messages to men as individuals. It requires every one, without respect to his national or family connexions, to act for himself. Personal faith, personal repentance, personal obedience, are the only conditions of enjoying its blessings. I scarcely need remark how inconsistent with all this, is the administration of an ordinance designed as a means of professing discipleship to Christ, to an individual on the ground that his parent is a disciple, or more properly, its observance by the parent in the place of the child. If this be required, it is an anomaly in the Christian system. What other gospel requirement can be performed by one in behalf of another, so that it shall not be obligatory on the latter? Is it prayer? Is it attention to the Scriptures? Is it the observance of the Sabbath, or the Lord's Supper? Is it faith, or repentance, or a godly

life? We may have been blessed with parents distinguished for their obedience to all these requirements. But are they on that account any the less personal duties? And why should it be otherwise in baptism? Or, if one act of obedience performed by our parents, can be imputed to us, why may not every other? And where is the necessity of personal religion at all? This is the result to which the principle on which infant baptism is defended, will, if carried out, inevitably lead.

2. The gospel is equally spiritual and personal in what it prescribes as *qualifications for membership in the kingdom of Christ.* The design of Christ in introducing the gospel dispensation, was to call out and bring together a peculiar people, separated from the world, and distinguished for their personal piety. He designed that his church, unlike the Jewish theocracy which included the whole nation, should consist of individuals, of whatever nation, condition, or natural relationship, who should become changed in their hearts, and voluntarily devote themselves to his service; that it should be "a *spiritual* house, *built up of spiritual stones*, a royal priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. 2: 5. He accordingly established with its members "a new covenant," differing essentially from that which had existed under the Mosaic economy, and including those only who should evince that the law of God was written on their hearts. Heb. 8: 6–13.

Such being the character which he designed his church should possess, how could he, consistently with the carrying out of this design, provide that multitudes incapable of exemplifying this character, should be introduced into its precincts, or be recognized as its

members? The church, in the application of such a principle, instead of being kept a separate body, composed of godly, spiritual members, would soon be commingled with the world, and become a mixed community like the Jewish nation. And the longer the principle should continue in operation, the greater would be the proportion of ungodly members, until the line of demarkation between the church and the world would be destroyed, and the very object for which the former was established, defeated. Such has been the actual result in every instance where the principles of pedobaptism have been left unrestrained to work out their legitimate effects.

Unless therefore we assume that our Lord intended to thwart the very design for which he established his church in the world, we must conclude that he made no provision for introducing into its pale multitudes of unregenerate individuals without their consent or agency.

SECTION III.

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION CONTINUED.—AN EXAMINATION OF PASSAGES IN WHICH THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST ARE COMPARED TO LITTLE CHILDREN.

THAT the baptism and church membership of infants are inconsistent with the design and genius of the gospel, is particularly apparent from those passages in the discourses of Christ in which he compares his disciples, or the members of his kingdom, to *little children*. The argument derived from this source is, as will appear upon examination, of a peculiarly interesting and decisive character.

In Mat. 18: 1–4, it is recorded, "At the same time came the disciples of Jesus; saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." In this passage those who become members of Christ's kingdom, are represented as assuming the character and taking the position of little children. They are converted from a self-seeking, self-exalting, haughty disposition, to one characterized by docility, artlessness, and humility. Such being their character, the appellation little children may, by an easy and natural metaphor, be very properly applied directly to them. Hence it is added, verse 5, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." In the parallel passage, Mark 9: 36, 37, it is said, "He took a child, and set him in the midst of them, and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me, and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

That by the expressions, "one such little child," "one of such children," our Lord intended to designate his disciples, will, perhaps, be considered too obvious to admit of dispute. It may not be amiss, however, that some of the reasons for this conclusion should be stated.

1. The design of Christ in the passages in which these expressions occur, was to discourage in his disciples a spirit of selfish, unholy ambition. How this

could be done by his reminding them of the treatment due little children in age, it is difficult to conceive. Such an allusion would have been, as far as we can perceive, entirely irrelevant to his purpose.

2. In the preceding verses, (Mat. 18, vs. 3 and 4,) the disciples of Christ are compared to little children. They even are represented as so humbling themselves as to assume the character of the little child before them. The language of verse 5, occuring in such a connexion, naturally refers to the same subjects.

3. The expression, "*these* little ones," in verse 6, is strikingly similar to those under consideration; and, as the words, "which believe in me," are subjoined, its application is placed beyond all dispute.

4. The contrast presented in verses 5 and 6, requires us to refer the language of both to the same subjects. "Whoso shall *receive* one such little child in my name receiveth me. *But* whoso shall *offend* one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

5. A comparison of Mark 9: 36, 41, with Mat. 10: 40, 42, will establish the same fact. The language addressed to the disciples in Mark, ver. 41, is in Matthew, ver. 42, applied to "one of these little ones;" while, on the other hand, the expression "one of such children," in Mark, ver. 36, is exchanged in Matthew, ver. 40, for the personal pronoun designating the disciples,—"He that receiveth *you*, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."

6. It is difficult to conceive of any sense in which a little child simply as such, can be received *in the name of Christ*, and especially, in such a manner that it can be regarded a reception of Christ himself. It

would be idle to suppose that in these passages our Lord intended to identify himself, and the interest of his cause, with every child that is born into the world. An individual to be received in the name and in the stead of Christ, must necessarily be his disciple.

In the light of these suggestions it is placed beyond all doubt that the language used Mat. 18: 5; Mark 9: 37, was intended to designate the disciples of Christ. The same considerations are equally applicable and decisive in determining the sense of the parallel passage, Luke 9, 46–48. The expression in verse 48, although slightly different in form, is obviously the same in import. Our Lord intimates, as in Mat. 18: 5; Mark 9: 37, that the child before him is to be received as *exemplified* in the character of his disciples:—as if he had said, 'You see here my disciple; not the proud, the self-important, the "exalted," but the humble, the unassuming, the despised by the world. Such is the character which I regard, and which is to be esteemed and loved for my sake. Whoso shall receive one exhibiting this character receiveth me.' This mode of instruction in which, by a bold and striking metaphor, the object selected for illustration is mentioned in place of the thing to be illustrated, is of frequent occurrence in the discourses of Christ. See Mat. 18: 8, 9, compared with verses 5 and 6; John 2: 19; Mat. 12: 48–50; John 6: 50–58; Mat. 26: 26–28. Compare also Mat. 5: 39, 40. An additional reason to those already adduced, for applying the language in Luke 9: 48, to the disciples of Christ, is found in the declaration that is subjoined,—"*for* he that is *least* among *you* all, the same shall be great." This is the explanation which Christ himself has given of his language in the preceding clause.

Its application, or import is, of course, on this ground alone, definitely determined.

We have been, perhaps it may be thought, unnecessarily particular in stating the reasons for a position, which doubtless would even without it have been considered too obvious to admit of dispute, that we might prepare the way more fully for the satisfactory examination of another class of kindred passages. If it be true that the little ones who believe in Christ, who are to be received in his name, and whose reception he acknowledges as a reception of himself, as mentioned in Mat. 18: 1–6, etc., are his disciples, the same interpretation is evidently to be given to the passages, Mat. 19: 14; Mark 10: 14, 15; Luke 18: 16, 17.

The account as given, Mark 10: 13–16, is as follows, "And they brought young children unto him that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, and put his hands on them, and blessed them." The disciples in their interference were doubtless influenced by the same feelings as led them to administer a similar rebuke to the blind man of Jericho. Luke 18: 39. They wished to spare their Master the annoyance or trouble of attending to the application. But,—as when Peter would avert his approaching sufferings, see Mat. 16: 22, 23,—he taught them that their kindness was misdirected. Actuated by the same benevolent disposition which led

him to listen to the cry of Bartimeus, and which never allowed him to disregard a sincere and reasonable application for his blessing, he accedes to the request in behalf of the little children, to wit, that he would "lay his hands on them and pray," see Mat. 19: 13; and the more readily, we may suppose, as a peculiarly favorable opportunity was thus afforded for illustrating the character befitting the members of his kingdom. Hence in connexion with the words, "Suffer the* little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," he observes, for the purpose of improving the incident to the instruction of his disciples, "for of such is the kingdom of God."

That our Lord here speaks of those who "humble themselves as little children," and thus assume their character, that is, of his disciples, cannot, we think, admit of a rational doubt. If upon other occasions, after calling little children to him, and taking them in his arms, and holding them up as patterns for his disciples, he had used the expressions, "one *such* little child," "one of *such* children," thereby designating, as we have shown, the subjects of his gospel, we are certainly bound, without some direct intimation to the contrary, to give the words "of *such* is the kingdom of heaven," the same natural exposition. Expressions so strikingly similar, uttered under similar circumstances, and obviously for a similar purpose, must, according to all correct rules of interpretation, have essentially the same import. There is no necessity, however, in establishing the point, that reference be had to parallel passages. The passage, Mark 10: 14,

* The original expression for "the little children," is the same in Mat. 19: 14, Luke, 18: 16, as in Mark 10: 14. In every instance the article is used.

15, Luke 18: 16, 17, presents its own explanation. Our Lord having uttered the words, "of such is the kinkdom of God," immediately adds, "Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." The manner in which this declaration is introduced, clearly indicates that it is in amplification and confirmation of the preceding statement. It shows, moreover, that our Lord is speaking exclusively of those who are capable of *receiving* the kingdom of God. To assert in one sentence that the kingdom of heaven is composed of infants, and in the next to affirm that it includes none but such as by humbling themselves receive it, would be apparently a contradiction.

From this examination of the several passages in the New Testament in which christians are compared to little children, the following facts are obvious.

1. The only qualifications for connexion with the kingdom which Christ has established on earth, admitted by the gospel, are *spiritual*, and such as pertain to *voluntary agents*. Its members are exclusively such as receive it in sincerity, such as "humble themselves," or become "converted." Infants, of course, cannot be included. And the argument derived from this source is the more interesting and conclusive, inasmuch as the qualifications specified are presented in connexion with direct reference to little ones. The requisites for membership in the kingdom of Christ of which it is admitted infants are destitute, are stated in passages in which their case is prominently brought to view. It is certain therefore they cannot be reckoned in the number of those who are designated as members.

2. These passages render it evident that the terms,

"little ones," "little children," etc., are applicable to the members of Christ's kingdom only in *one* sense. They teach us who *are* the persons related to him, to whom these appellations are appropriate. As, when upon a certain occasion his attention was called to his mother and his brethren, he turned to his disciples, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren," thus intimating that he recognized no other relationship in his kingdom than that of discipleship; so whenever little children became the objects of his notice, he seems to have improved the opportunity in teaching that his disciples were the little ones related to him, and with whom the interests of his kingdom were identified.

3. Another fact particularly deserving of notice, is the perfectly *free and unrestricted manner* in which the terms, "little ones," "such children," etc., are employed to designate disciples. We hear the Saviour, even after calling attention to little children, and declaring that the members of his kingdom must possess similar traits of character, familiarly using these terms as appellations of his disciples, without the slightest intimation that his language was susceptible of being understood in any other sense. He introduces no remark apparently designed to guard against misapprehension. He seems to have taken it for granted that when he spake of "little ones" as connected with his kingdom, he should at once be understood as referring to the subjects of his gospel. So entirely foreign was it to all ideas suggested by his instructions to consider little ones in age as members of his kingdom.*

* For an examination of the phrase, "the kingdom of God," see Note F. Appendix.

SECTION IV.

THE DIRECT TEACHING OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES RESPECTING THE QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY FOR BAPTISM AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

THAT believers are the only proper subjects of baptism, is further evident from the direct teaching of Christ and his apostles respecting *the qualifications requisite for baptism and visible church membership.* It is obvious he designed that none should be admitted as members of the church except on a credible profession of true discipleship. This appears from the model of a church given us in the New Testament. The first churches are uniformly described both in the Acts and in the Epistles, as consisting of believers, saints, the regenerated, the sanctified, the faithful in Christ. This accords with what Christ had enjoined in his final commission. "Go ye therefore, and *teach* or *make disciples of* all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Mat. 28: 19. "He that *believeth* and is baptized, shall be saved." Mark 16: 16. This language clearly implies that faith or discipleship is necessary to the proper observance of baptism. The subjects of the ordinance are designated as those who *believe* or are *converted.* That this was the light in which the commission was regarded by those who received it directly from the lips of their Master, is evident from the fact that we uniformly find them inculcating the same doctrine. "*Repent* and be baptized." Acts 2: 30. "Who can forbid water that these should be baptized, *who have received the Holy Ghost* as well as we?" Acts 10: 49. And even in case of direct application for baptism, the reply is, "*If thou believest with all*

thy heart, thou mayest." Acts 8: 37. Faith in Christ is thus presented as an indispensable prerequisite to baptism. We arrive at the same conclusion by examining the several passages relating to baptism in the Epistles. They plainly teach that none were regarded as proper subjects for the ordinance, but such as were prepared to "put on Christ," and to "walk in newness of life." See Rom. 6: 2–11; Gal. 3: 28–30; Col. 2: 12. There is nothing in the teaching either of Christ, or of his apostles, affording the slightest authority for the administration of baptism to any but such as give evidence of genuine discipleship.

SECTION V.

PEDOBAPTISM DIRECTLY REFUTED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT

Notwithstanding the facts presented in the preceding sections, it is frequently urged, that, if infants are not mentioned in the New Testament as proper subjects for baptism and church membership, they are not expressly *excluded;* if their baptism is not enjoined, it is also not *forbidden*. To this it might be a sufficient reply, that the same is true of unconverted adults, and of all infants, as well as those of believing parents. To administer baptism on this ground, moreover, would be to disregard the authority of Christ, and trifle with his institutions. In instituting the ordinance he has specified and described the subjects, and those who would meet his approbation must adhere to his instructions. To act without authority is in positive institutions equivalent to acting in opposition to authority. It is *deviating* from the requisitions of the Master.

But, independently of these suggestions, we believe it can be made perfectly obvious from the New Testament, that in the administration of baptism, and the admission of members to the church, infants are *expressly excluded.* The only right to baptism and church membership that is, or can be, claimed in their behalf, is that founded on relations or privileges acquired, or supposed to have been acquired, by *natural birth.* Under the former dispensation these relations were regarded. It was simply necessary that an individual should be born of Hebrew parents to entitle him to a participation in all the rites and privileges peculiar to the Jewish theocracy. But in the kingdom of Christ all relations resulting from natural birth are declared to be of no avail. No one is entitled to the peculiar privileges of the gospel in consequence of what he possesses by nature, or independently of personal regeneration. In this respect the Jewish and Christian dispensations are represented as being *essentially different.*

This doctrine is first distinctly brought to view in the preaching of John the Baptist. While he announced the approach of the kingdom of the Messiah, he exhorted the people to repent, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, as the only condition on which they could claim membership in this kingdom, or enjoy its peculiar blessings. Mat. 3: 2, 8, 10, 12. "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," ver. 9. They were thus distinctly taught that their relation to Abraham as his natural descendants, however much it might have benefited them under the Mosaic dispensation, would be of no avail in the king-

dom of Christ. It is also intimated that a different relationship, and one in no respect the result of natural generation, would henceforth be recognized. It will be observed the Baptist is here speaking, not of Jews in distinction from Gentiles, nor of adults in distinction from infants, but of those who are related to Abraham by natural descent, in distinction from those who are his "children" on other grounds, (ver. 9,) and who become connected with the kingdom of God by repentance of sin, and a change of character. Comp. verses 2, 8, 9, 10. The Jews were considered the seed of Abraham *without respect to age.* They were such from their very birth. This relation, which was thus in the mind of the Jew associated with the period of *infancy* no less than of manhood, is here directly *contrasted* with the requisite qualifications for baptism and membership in the kingdom of Christ; and as this is all that is claimed in behalf of the infant offspring of christian parents, the ground on which their right to baptism is predicated, is thus set aside in the first annunciation of the gospel dispensation.

The same doctrine is presented with still greater clearness, if possible, in the instructions of Christ himself. In his conversation with Nicodemus, John 3, he declares, "Except a man be *born again* he cannot see the kingdom of God," or *experience* that in which it consists, and by which it is distinguished, i. e. participate in its peculiar privileges. Compare John 3 : 36 ; 8 : 51 ; Acts 2 : 27, 31, etc. The phrase "the kingdom of God" is evidently used, as in Mark 1 : 15; 4 : 30 ; Luke 16 : 16 ; 17 : 20 ; Mat. 21 : 31, 32, and in most of the passages in which it occurs in the Evangelists, to denote the kingdom of the Messiah, introduced with the gospel dispensation, and including the

blessedness of heaven. The sentiment of ver. 3 is repeated and more fully explained in verses 5 and 6. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," i. e., experience the *washing* of a *re*generation by the *Spirit*, (comp. Tit. 3: 5,) "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* That which is *born of the flesh* is flesh, and that which is *born of the Spirit* is spirit." Natural generation is here directly contrasted with regeneration, and is declared to be insufficient to membership in the kingdom of the Messiah. This is the privelege of none but such as are *born again.* Those who are merely "born of the flesh" are expressly *excluded.*

Now had Christ commanded his disciples to baptize infants, and recognize them as members of his kingdom, as is generally assumed by Pedobaptists, the inquiry would naturally have arisen in their minds, What is the ground of their right to these privileges? And had he replied, that although not regenerated, they were to be admitted on the ground of relations acquired by natural birth, we can easily imagine the surprise with which they would have exclaimed, But how is this possible? Has it not been declared that in the kingdom of the Messiah, natural birth is of no avail;—that no one can become connected with it *except he be born again?* To reconcile these opposite positions is, we believe, impossible.

The declarations of Christ upon this point would naturally be borne in mind by his disciples when they received their final commission; and even had he omitted to designate the subjects of baptism as disciples or believers, they could not have understood him otherwise than as enjoining the baptism, not of those who should be born into the world, whether of believ-

*Note G. Appendix.

ing or unbelieving parents, but of those only who should give evidence that they were "born again." He had taught them that the terms of admission into his kingdom were peculiar; that those only could become its members, who, in addition to being "born of the flesh," should be "born of the Spirit;" and it would be folly for them to apply the rite of recognition to such as were not entitled to membership.

That this was the light in which the apostles viewed the instructions of their Lord, is abundantly evident from various passages in their writings in which the same doctrine is inculcated.

We first notice the testimony of the apostle John. John 1: 11–13. "He came unto his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; *who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*" The Jews were considered "the children of the Lord" by virtue of their descent from Abraham, or their connexion with the nation whom he had chosen to be "his peculiar people above all the nations on the earth." Deut. 14: 1, 2. See also Ex. 4: 22; Jer. 31: 9; Isa. 63: 16, 17; Ps. 33: 12. It was on the ground of this relationship that they, whether infants or adults, were entitled to the rites and privileges of the Jewish economy. It was for this reason that Christ regarded them as "his own," even when they possessed the disposition which led them to reject him. Upon the introduction of the gospel, however, none were acknowledged the children of God, but such as believed in Christ, and were born from above. A mere *blood* relationship was not recognized.

It is certain, therefore, that the natural descendants of christians are not, as were the children of Jewish parents, included among the children or people of God. The only ground on which their right to baptism and church membership can consistently be predicated, does not accordingly exist; and the argument urged in its defence is reduced to this,—The Jewish infant, inasmuch as he was reckoned among the children or people of God, was entitled to circumcision, *therefore* the infant offspring of christians are entitled to baptism, although they sustain *no such relationship*, although, in fact, the only claim that can be preferred in their behalf, or blood relationship, has been entirely discarded.

This doctrine is presented and applied with still greater explicitness in the epistles of Paul. This will be evident from an examination of those passages in which he speaks of *circumcision*. He teaches that under the gospel the circumcised and the uncircumcised stand precisely on the same ground. Rom. 2: 26–28. "In Christ Jesus *neither circumcision availeth any thing* nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,—but faith that works by love." Gal. 5: 6; 6: 15. He admits that circumcision as practiced by the Jews was not without its benefits. Rom. 3: 1, 2. It was an "advantage" to them in a variety of respects; and that too, although many of them were destitute of saving faith. Rom. 3: 3; and chap. 2: 28, 29, compared with chap. 3: 1, 2. It secured the enjoyment of blessings by which they were distinguished from other nations, particularly those resulting from their being favored with the oracles of God. Rom. 3: 2. It thus appears that the apostle is speaking of circumcision in a sense in which it was really *available* to the

Jewish nation. He refers not to its form or its mere external observance, but to its object, its advantages, the grounds on which it was practiced. He shows that it is of no avail under the gospel, not simply as an external transaction, but as a badge of *distinction*, as an indication of *relationship to Abraham*, as an actual *privilege* pertaining to the Jewish dispensation. His argument utterly forbids the supposition that the original institution is still in force, the external rite simply having been exchanged for another of similar import. Circumcision is unavailing, inasmuch as the only thing that is of any avail is faith, or a new creation, and the only circumcision that is recognized is spiritual. Rom. 2: 28, 29. Did the apostle allude merely to the outward ceremony, his reasoning would be singularly inconclusive. The possession of faith would be no reason for disregarding one external rite more than any other that might be introduced in its stead. It is made to appear that circumcision is of no avail on the ground that faith is possessed, only as its observance is predicated on certain relations and privileges with which faith is properly contrasted, and which are no longer regarded. The ground on which infant baptism is practiced is accordingly excluded from the Christian system. A natural relationship to Abraham, or to the people of God, which was indicated by circumcision, and which is all that can be claimed in behalf of infants, is declared to be of no avail in the kingdom of Christ. The only relation that is available is that acquired by faith, or a new creation. The ancient law of circumcision, so far from being continued in the Christian church with simply a change in the external rite, has been entirely done away; so that the only circumcision now recognized is "that of the heart in

the spirit," and "made without hands." Rom. 2: 28, 29; Col. 2: 11; Eph. 2: 11.

SECTION VI.

THE ARGUMENT SHOWING THAT PEDOBAPTISM IS DIRECTLY REFUTED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT, CONTINUED.—AN EXAMINATION OF ROM. XI: 11–32.

To the Biblical student it is an interesting fact, strikingly exemplifying the credibility of the sacred writings, that passages adduced in the defence of error, are usually found, upon examination, not only to have been misinterpreted, but to contain some proof, more or less direct, of the opposite truth. Rom. 11: 11–32 may be presented as an example. No passage is appealed to with more confidence in defence of the baptism and church membership of infants: and yet a careful examination of its import will render obvious, we trust, not only that it is entirely irrelevant for such a purpose, but that it meets the whole system of pedobaptism with a direct and decisive refutation.

Expositors have usually taken for granted that "the fall" of the Jews (vs. 11, 12, 15,) contributed to the benefit of the Gentiles, only as it became the occasion of the prevalence of the gospel among them. We are constrained, however, to regard this as an unwarrantable assumption. First, the apostle is not speaking of the spread or prevalence of the gospel among the Gentiles, but the extension of its privileges to them. "Through their fall, salvation has come," or is extended, "to the Gentiles," ver. 11. Secondly, the promulgation of the gospel among the Gentiles did not depend on the exclusion of the Jews from its privileges.

It was in accordance with God's original plan that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in the name of Christ among all nations." And had the Jews without exception embraced the gospel, the Gentiles would no less certainly have been made partakers of its blessings. Thirdly, the apostle is apparently speaking of the fall of the Jews in a sense which implies that it was not the indirect occasion, but the necessary condition, of the extension of the gospel to the Gentiles; an event without which the Gentiles, as such, could not have been introduced into the kingdom of Christ. Both the language employed, and, as will appear upon investigation, the nature of the argument, lead to this conclusion. Comp. vs. 12, 15, 17, 20.

It has also been generally assumed that the relation indicated in the passage, particularly in vs. 16–25, is that of visible church membership. This supposition, however, cannot easily be reconciled with the fact that the relation is one, which, under the gospel, implies the salvation of the soul, and is inseparably connected with personal faith in Christ, vs. 11, 14, 20, 23, 26, 30.

Both of these errors have originated in a misapprehension of the design and nature of the apostle's argument. Instead of proceeding, as is usually represented, on the principle that the Christian church is virtually the same with the Jewish theocracy, he takes a position not only dissimilar, but directly the reverse. He proceeds on the ground that the gospel economy is essentially different in its nature, its principles, and its requisitions, from that which had previously existed; *that while the general relation or privilege involved in being the peculiar people of God was continued, the conditions of enjoying this privilege had become changed;* that the Jews, except as far as they had, by believing

in Christ, complied with the requisitions of the new dispensation, had been "broken off" from this relationship, and that the Gentiles, upon the exercise of faith, had been brought in, and were now, together with the believing Jews, regarded as the only true people of God. Under the former dispensation, the Jews were considered the people of God by virtue of their descent from Abraham; but under the gospel, this relation is sustained by none, whether Jews or Gentiles, but such as become the subjects of saving faith.

This fundamental principle in the apostle's reasoning is distinctly and prominently brought to view in the preceding chapters. In chap. 9: 1–8, he calls attention to "his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh." They are introduced as those who had sustained to God a peculiar and endearing relation, by virtue of which they had been blessed with special religious privileges. They were "Israelites, to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose were the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever." These advantages, however, the apostle teaches, are of no avail under the gospel dispensation. In the Christian church a different relation is established. The general idea expressed by the terms "Israel," and "the people of God," is indeed continued; but not with the same application. Christians, it is true, sustain a connection with Abraham; but it is not a natural connection. None are considered "the children of God," or "the seed of Abraham," because they are "the children of the

flesh." None are acknowledged as such, but genuine disciples of Christ, vs. 6–8.

In one sense, the apostle intimates, the Jews were the seed of Abraham, and the Israel of God. So they had ever been regarded, and so they are here designated, vs. 4, 7. But in the gospel this relation is not recognized. In the kingdom of Christ, those only are "counted for the seed," who have personally embraced the truth. In these, the word of God respecting the seed of Abraham has been fulfilled; compare vs. 6 and 7. To these the promise of grace relates, and by them it has been realized, ver. 8. And they have become the people of God on entirely different principles from those which operated under the former dispensation. They enjoy this relation, not from any advantages of birth, but solely in consequence of a separate and special act of divine grace. God exercises discrimination in reference to the members of his kingdom, vs. 9 23. His people consist, not of those who are merely connected with Abraham by lineal descent, but of those whom he has personally called out from the rest of mankind, "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles," ver. 24; of those who have become the subjects of personal faith, and are consequently justified before God, vs. 30, 32, 33. Personal piety, or faith, is the only and all sufficient condition of enjoying the blessings of the gospel. "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed; for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek," chap. 10: 11, 12. National distinctions, lineal descent, advantages of birth or natural relationship, all are entirely unknown, chap. 10: 4–13. And this is confirmed by the testimony of the ancient prophets, vs. 19–21.

In chap. 11, the apostle proceeds to show that,

although, as had been shown, the Jewish nation were no longer regarded as the people of God, it did not follow that they had been unconditionally cast off as reprobates. They might still, equally with all other nations, upon the exercise of faith, secure the blessings of the gospel, and become the people of God in a new and more important sense, ver. 1, seq. This was evident from the fact that a portion of the nation had actually been converted, and brought into the kingdom of Christ. A remnant according to the election of grace had been saved, vs. 1–5. The grace of God had been displayed in the salvation of individuals, although "Israel," or the nation in general, had not obtained that to which they professed to be aspiring, ver. 7. They had become blinded. Christ had become to them "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," vs. 7, 10, comp. chap. 9: 32, 33. There was in the gospel so much that was new and peculiar, its terms of relationship to God were so entirely different from those of the former dispensation, that they were offended, and had "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," chap. 9: 32, comp. John 8: 39; Matt. 3: 9; Luke 7: 30.

It was not, however,—as is intimated in ver. 1,—to be inferred that they had stumbled so as to fall absolutely, to be beyond the hope of salvation, ver. 11. The blessings of the gospel were still within their reach; and the very change in the divine economy, by which they were deprived of their national distinction, tended in its consequences to incite them to avail themselves of those blessings. "Through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles to provoke them to emulation," ver. 11. Their conversion, moreover, would be an advantage to the Gentile world. The introduc-

tion of the gospel among the nations, instead of being thereby prevented, would be essentially promoted. 'For if their fall from the high relation which they had sustained to God as his peculiar people, in distinction from all other nations,—if the annihilation of this distinction, had opened the way for the Gentiles to be received into the favor of God, how much more rapidly and widely would the gospel be extended in the world, were they themselves to admit its claims, and comply with its requisitions,' ver. 12. As it would be obvious that nothing but a firm conviction of its truth and intrinsic importance could induce them to abandon opinions in which they had been educated, and which they had long fondly cherished, to renounce all dependence on privileges and relations which had been the pride of their ancestors, and by which they had ever been distinguished from the rest of mankind, the impulse given to the truth would be irresistible.

The apostle is here speaking, not of some predicted future event, but of the natural result of the state of things indicated. And he intimates that as far as the latter should at any time be realized, so far the former might be anticipated. He accordingly remarks that one object which he proposed to himself even in his capacity as "an apostle to the Gentiles," was the conversion of the Jews,—"if by any means he might save some of them," vs. 13, 14. "For if the rejection of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the reception of them be, but life from the dead," ver. 15.

In ver. 16 the apostle again introduces, and applies to his argument, the fact alluded to at the beginning of the chapter. "For if the first fruits be holy, the mass is also holy." The term "holy" here used, it is

universally admitted, is not descriptive of moral holiness. Its import must be determined by reference to the Jewish custom to which allusion is had. As, in the law, the consecration and acceptance of the first fruits was proof that the mass was accepted, so the conversion of a portion of the Jewish nation leads to the conclusion that the remainder may be accepted on the same terms,—that they have not been consigned to hopeless reprobation.

Or "if the root be holy, so are the branches." It will be observed that the only distinction here indicated is between "the root" and "the branches." The root, according to the representation of vs. 17, 18, 19, is not only the source of nourishment to the branches, but that in which they inhere, by which they are upheld, into which they are grafted. The figure is that of a root shooting forth into a stem or stock with which the branches are connected. In this application of the word ῥίζα (riza), the apostle was justified by the use of the Hebrew term, with which in the Septuagint and in the New Testament it corresponds, and which not unfrequently includes in its signification the sprout or stem, no less than the root whence it springs. Isa. 53: 2; Isa. 11: 10, compared with Isa. 11: 1; Rom. 15: 12.

The figure is here applied to that on which the Jews were dependent for whatever they enjoyed in distinction from the rest of mankind, to wit, the state of special favor with God into which they had been introduced,—the relation which had been established between them and God, by which they were constituted his peculiar people. If this relation were holy,—if it were not a mere pretext, a manifest reflection on the sincerity and holiness of God (comp. ver. 29); in other words, if God had actually set apart the Jewish nation

for himself and made them the objects of special favor under one dispensation, it might reasonably be expected that he would regard them with interest upon the introduction of a new dispensation,—that they would not, certainly, be considered reprobates, or be absolutely and unconditionally cast away; that they would be accepted on equal terms, to say the least, with those who had always and in every sense been in a state of alienation.

And even though some of the branches, or a portion of the nation who had all along been regarded as the people of God, had, in consequence of not complying with the terms of the new dispensation, been "broken off" from that relationship, and the privilege of becoming his people conferred on the Gentiles, ver. 17; still it had been done on such a principle that it gave the Gentiles no real advantage over the Jews. The former had no ground for boasting, as if they had been made the objects of special or exclusive favor, ver. 18. Not only had they, by being constituted the people of God, been brought into a relation which the Jews in one sense had long held, and into the enjoyment of blessings, with the knowledge and anticipation of which the Jews had long been favored; but the conditions on which they held this relation, and enjoyed these blessings, were of universal application, vs. 18–22. True, the Jews had been "broken off," or were no longer regarded in distinction from all other nations as the people of God, in order that this privilege might be extended on other conditions to the Gentiles, vs. 19, 20: yet it was no less true that the same faith by which the Gentile held this relation, was equally available in the case of the Jew, vs. 20, 23, 24.

Had the Jews, upon the proclamation of the gospel

to them by Christ and his disciples, embraced it, and become its subjects, they might have continued to be regarded as the people of God; not on the same principles as had been previously recognized, not because they were the descendants of Abraham, but on the ground of their faith in Christ, and union with him. But as they declined retaining the relation on this condition, it became necessary, in order that the Gentiles might be admitted to equal privileges, that they should be broken off from it entirely. Their unbelief was consequently the real cause of their fall or alienation.

The argument of the apostle has thus far proceeded on the principle that the Jews in all ages may, upon complying with the requisitions of the gospel, avail themselves of its blessings; that there is nothing which excludes them from its benefits, that is not of universal application. He now (ver. 25, seq.) adduces, in support of his position stated in vs. 1, 11, an additional consideration. It is the purpose of God eventually to convert the nation as a whole. This had been foretold by the prophets, vs. 26, 27. It might also be inferred from the promises of God to the patriarchs, vs. 27, 28. For although "as concerning the gospel," the unbelieving Jews were regarded as "enemies," "for the sake of the Gentiles," although as far as the principles of the Christian dispensation were concerned, they were viewed in the same light as all other unbelievers,—all distinction arising from natural descent having been done away,—that thus the blessings of the gospel might be extended to all nations; it was nevertheless true that God had a regard for the nation in view of his promises to their ancestors, and that these promises insured their ultimate general acceptance of

the terms of the new covenant. This, however, did not, could not, affect their relation to the kingdom of Christ. The gospel regarded them as enemies, excluded from the favor of God, and destined to remain so, until they should accept of mercy on terms which admit of no distinction of nation or natural character.

Verses 30–32 are chiefly a repetition, in another form, of the sentiment illustrated in the preceding context, viz., the gospel, as it finds Jews and Gentiles in the same state of alienation from God, admits them to a participation in its blessings on the same conditions.

The words translated "through their unbelief," (ver. 30,) "signify," says Dr. Bloomfield, "as the best commentators, ancient and modern, are agreed, '*at*,' '*on occasion of*,' their disobedience." The same remark is applicable to the phrase rendered "through your mercy," in the next verse, which should be connected in sense, as in the original scriptures it is in construction, with the former clause,—"Even so have these also now become unbelievers *on the occasion of your experiencing mercy*." Απειθεια (unbelief) must not be confounded in sense with απιστια (unbelief) in vs. 20, 23. It includes the idea of disobedience, as also of opposition and alienation. It is here indicative rather of state or condition, than of action. Its sense is determined by its corresponding verb in the preceding clause: "As ye in times past *have not believed* God." The obvious import of this expression may be illustrated by such passages as Col. 1: 21; Eph. 2: 12, 13, 17; 4: 18, 19; Rom. 1: 21–32; Acts 17: 21; etc. It indicates not so much the rejection of a specified revelation, as a state of estrangement and general depravity. The phrase "on occasion of their disobedience" (ver. 30), as it denotes that the Jews

had *ceased* to be obedient, implies that formerly, i. e., while the Gentiles were disobedient, they had enjoyed a state of reconciliation with God. The case of the Gentiles is thus shown to be strikingly parallel with that of the Jews as stated in ver. 31. The phrase is introduced, we suppose, partly to indicate this fact, and partly in anticipation of the statement that follows. The sense of the whole (vs. 30, 31) may be thus expressed: "As the Gentiles have formerly been without God in the world, but have now, on occasion of the Jews becoming unbelieving and alienated, experienced the mercy of God; in like manner the Jews have, by their contumacy and disobedience on the extension of mercy to the Gentiles, been brought into a state where, equally with the Gentiles, they are proper subjects for the exercise of mercy."

"For God," adds the apostle (ver. 32), "has concluded them all in unbelief (alienation), that he might have mercy on all." In accordance with the principles of the Mosaic economy, the nation in general, as they were not idolaters, were reckoned as believers in the God of Israel. They were his worshippers, his servants, his witnesses, his chosen people. But upon the introduction of the gospel, which is essentially different in its nature and design,—whose blessings are primarily not national and temporal, but spiritual and eternal, those who refused to exercise that faith which implies a saving change of heart, were, equally with the idolatrous Gentiles, regarded as unbelievers and aliens. The way was thus fully open for God to deal with men solely in view of their individual character and deserts. Had the blessings of the gospel been extended to the Jews on the same principles on which they had enjoyed their national privileges, they would

have considered themselves entitled to them by virtue of the promises made to Abraham, and their relation to him as his natural descendants. But as they were conferred solely on the ground of personal regeneration and faith in Christ, it was evident that the Jews had no more claim to them than the Gentiles; that they were equally, while unconverted, in a state of enmity and condemnation, and that if they ever were regarded with favor, the *mercy* of God to them as individuals must be equally exercised. Ver. 32, in accordance with this simple and natural interpretation, expresses merely the consequence of a change in the conditions on which the Jews could be regarded as the objects of divine favor.

In the foregoing investigation we have endeavored to notice and present in its proper light every point essential to the apostle's argument. The passage, on account both of its doctrinal and practical bearings, is well worthy of the space which has been devoted to its examination. The application which may be made of it in refutation of the principles of pedobaptism is obvious.

1. It is fatal to the position that the Jewish theocracy and the Christian church are the same visible organization. It must be evident, upon the most cursory examination, that it contains nothing in favor of such a position. It makes no allusion to any visible organization whatever. Is it said that such an organization is indicated by the figure of the good olive tree? It may suffice to ask, in reply, What organization is meant by the wild olive tree, from which the Gentiles as *branches* are *cut off?* If the latter, as is universally admitted, denotes "a *condition* which is one of enmity and hostility to God" (see Barnes on Romans), may

not the former,—as is conceded by Dr. Barnes in his remarks on ver. 24, although apparently in contradiction to what he has elsewhere advanced,—indicate "a *state* of favor with God?" In fact, does not the nature of the contrast exhibited in ver. 24 require such an interpretation? The correctness of this view is equally apparent from the nature of the apostle's argument. Its several parts and illustrations, no less than its general tenor, as we have fully shown, require us to regard the figure of the good olive tree as indicating a state of reconciliation and favor with God, or more specifically, the relationship involved in being his peculiar people. From this relationship the Jews, on the introduction of the gospel, were "broken off," and into it the Gentiles, on other principles, were "engrafted." In all this there is not the slighest allusion to any visible organization.

But the passage not merely contains nothing in support of the position under consideration; it exhibits principles and facts which present in a clear and interesting light its utter fallacy. The design, the subjects, the requisitions, the distinctive blessings, of the Jewish economy, were essentially different from those of the Christian. The one related to the Jewish nation, and was designed to keep them a distinct people from the rest of mankind. The other relates to those whose hearts are renewed by the Spirit of God, of whatever nation, and has special reference to their spiritual and eternal interests. That two organizations, adapted respectively to the nature and design of these different economies, formed on principles and existing under circumstances so entirely dissimilar, should be the same, is impossible. This is the more obvious as there is nothing in their external history to suggest the idea

that they are to be identified. The disciples of Christ were called out and established as a distinct community, subject to their own peculiar regulations, having the right of discipline over their own members, and pursuing their own specific ends, all, while the Jewish organization continued externally in existence, and the Jewish Christians generally observed its institutions. The Christian church, as visibly organized, can in no sense be identified with the Jewish theocracy. Its relations and ordinances are consequently established on independent grounds.

2. The passage is equally fatal to the position that infants are proper subjects for membership in the Christian church, and consequently entitled to its initiatory ordinance. That such a position receives no countenance from the supposed identity of the Jewish and Christian organizations, has been already shown. In addition to this, the passage clearly teaches that the only ground on which infant baptism is, or can be defended, does not exist. It establishes the principle, that all distinctions or privileges involving connection with the people of God, supposed to be acquired by natural birth, or independently of personal faith and repentance, are unknown in the kingdom of Christ. As it is unnecessary to repeat the evidence of this fact, it having been so fully exhibited in the preceding pages, so the principle need only be stated that its inconsistency with the theory and practice of infant baptism may be apparent. If infants, whether of believing or unbelieving parents, are connected with the people of God, or are fit subjects for entering into such a connection, it is only by virtue of their natural birth. It is vain to allege that their parents may be the spiritual seed of Abraham, and consequently interested in

the promises of grace. The point at issue is the relation, not of the parents, but of the children. The only relations which can possibly be claimed in their behalf are natural, or those for which they are by nature qualified. But the argument of the apostle exhibited above is decisive that in the kingdom of Christ no such relations are recognized. In this the Christian economy differs essentially from the Jewish. This difference the apostle has not only fully exhibited, but he has made it the very foundation of his argument. The baptism and church membership of infants can be defended only as this difference is overlooked, or denied, and the Jewish and Christian economies are made to correspond in the very point in which it is the object of the apostle to show that they differ, or, more properly, are opposed.

We shall not be understood as intimating in these remarks, that the argument of the apostle is directed specifically against the *practice* of infant baptism; for as this was unknown in the primitive ages of the church, there was no occasion for any allusion to it. But to the only ground on which the practice can be defended, it is directly and irreconcilably at variance. Of the entire system of pedobaptism, it is a complete and unequivocal refutation.

SECTION VII.

THE SAME ARGUMENT CONTINUED.—ROM. IV: 9–18, A REFUTATION OF PEDOBAPTISM. THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION NOT OF FORCE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

AMONG the few passages in the New Testament from which it is supposed the right of infants to baptism and church membership may be inferred, is Rom. 4: 9–18. Dr. Chalmers, after giving a general exposition of verses 9–15, observes, "The first lesson we shall endeavor to draw from this passage is, that it seems to contain in it the main strength of the scriptural argument for Infant Baptism." This argument as usually stated is briefly this,—As circumcision was to Abraham, so it was to his descendants, and so is baptism to christians, a seal of the righteousness of faith; and as Jewish infants were circumcised, those born of christian parents should be baptized. In this argument several things essential to its validity are taken for granted, which will appear, upon examination, to be opposed to facts.

It is assumed that circumcision was to the posterity of Abraham, no less than to himself, a seal of the righteousness of faith. The groundlessness of this position will readily become apparent. Circumcision was a "token" or indication that its subjects were interested in the covenant blessings promised to the Jewish nation as such. It was, indeed, an indispensable condition of enjoying those blessings. Gen. 17: 14. But that it was ever considered in the case of all who received it, a seal or attestation of the acceptance of their faith as a justifying righteousness, is, certainly, an unwarrantable assumption. Connexion with the

Jewish people was in all cases regarded as a sufficient reason for its application. With Abraham it was otherwise. He had exercised faith in the divine promises, his faith had been accepted, and in attestation of that acceptance, he received in behalf of himself, his household, and his posterity, a rite by which they were to be designated as a community enjoying the special favor of God. The peculiarity of his case is particularly referred to by the apostle in the remark, that he "*received* the sign of circumcision," i. e. he did not submit to it as an institution already in existence, he received it directly from the hand of God for the purpose of transmitting it to his posterity. It is worthy of notice that *circumcision, in the sense in which it is here called "a seal," was received but once, and that by Abraham in its original institution.* He received it, moreover, as a seal of the righteousness of a faith which he had *yet being uncircumcised.* The apostle thus, not only confines his description to Abraham, but directly *contrasts* his case with that of his posterity. Comp. vs. 10, 11.

It is also assumed, that *baptism* is a seal of the righteousness of faith, or an attestation on the part of God that the subject possesses a faith that is counted to him for righteousness. A sufficient refutation of this assumption is contained in the fact that no such use is ever in the New Testament ascribed to any external rite. Baptism is chiefly a profession on the part of its subjects of an interest in the gospel. Hence no argument could be deduced from the circumstance that circumcision is called a seal in ver. 11, *even were* the language applicable to Abraham's posterity in general, no less than to himself.

Another position assumed in the argument under

consideration is, that circumcision and baptism, on the supposition they may be regarded as in some respects seals of the same thing, were designed to be applied in all cases to the same class of subjects. Now should we acknowledge the premise in this reasoning to be correct, the conclusion would by no means naturally follow. Were we to admit that to the Jewish infant—while as yet he was alike unable to appreciate the blessing of justification, and incapable of faith,—circumcision was actually a seal or attestation of his justification by faith, it would be obvious, that *this* could not have been the reason that the rite was administered *in infancy;* but we should naturally infer, that notwithstanding the manifest *incongruity* involved in the case, there were *other* things pertaining to the Jewish dispensation which rendered such a custom proper. And our only appropriate inquiry would be, Do those *other reasons* exist with respect to Christian baptism? In other words, in seeking an answer to the question, Who are to be regarded as the proper subjects of each institution? we should naturally look at its general object, the place it was designed to occupy in the divine economy, and the distinctive nature of the dispensation with which it originated. And prosecuting the inquiry on these grounds, we should legitimately be led to this conclusion,—As the Jewish economy had respect to the natural descendants of Israel as such, and was designed to keep them a distinct people, circumcision the appointed badge of nationality, would, it might be expected, be applied, irrespectively of age or circumstances, to all the members, (that is, the male members) of the nation. But, as the kingdom of Christ is mainly spiritual in its nature and design, acknowledging as its subjects those of whatever nation, and

those *only*, who become the subjects of faith and regeneration, the rite of recognition would naturally be restricted to such. It would be singular reasoning indeed, to infer, that because circumcision was administered to all who *actually became members* of the Jewish commonwealth, *therefore* baptism, the rite of public recognition in the kingdom of Christ, should be administered to those who are *not* entitled to membership.

The several positions assumed in the argument stated above are thus shown to be equally untenable and fallacious. The argument utterly fails if placed on the issue of *either;* and yet they are *all* essential to its validity. *Not one* of them can be sustained; and yet *not one* can be *omitted*, without rendering the others useless, and leaving no ground for the argument.

But it was not our design in calling attention to this passage to prove that it is *silent* with respect to the baptism of infants. It is especially deserving of examination as containing a direct and decisive *refutation* of the principles of pedobaptism.

The apostle, having stated in chap. 1 the grand theme of his epistle, to wit, that the gospel is "the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," in chaps. 2 and 3, establishes the position that the only circumcision known among christians is spiritual. (See Sect. 5). He remarks that "the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference;" that "there is one God who justifies the circumcision and the uncircumcision alike by faith." He then, in chap. 4, appeals in confirmation of his position to the case of Abraham. He shows, not only that the ground on

which he was accepted was independent of the law of circumcision, but that *he sustains no relation to the Christian church which can be identified with that law.* He was not justified by works; but it is said, "He *believed God*, and it was counted to him for righteousness," vs. 1–3. After quoting a passage from the 32d Psalm, in which the blessing of gratuitous justification is brought to view, the apostle inquires, "Cometh this blessedness, then, on the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision." vs. 9, 10. It thus appears that he was justified not only by faith, but altogether independently of circumcision. He even received the sign of circumcision, as Dr. Barnes observes, "*in consequence* of his being justified by faith;" as an attestation of the fact that he had been *previously* accepted,—"a seal of the righteousness of a faith which he had while living in a state of uncircumcision."

But what is to be inferred from these facts? What was the design of God in observing this order of antecedence and sequence? Why was Abraham justified while in uncircumcision? and why is circumcision itself a proof of this fact? Mark the answer of the apostle,—"that he might be the *father* of all them that believe *though they be not circumcised*, that righteousness might be imputed to them also: and that he might be the *father* of the circumcision—i. e. of the Jews, (comp. chap. 2: 30),—to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham *which he had yet being uncircumcised*,"—who are related to him, not on

the ground that they have been circumcised, and are connected with his natural descendants, but because they resemble him in the possession of a faith which has no connexion with circumcision. The apostle thus shows that in the kingdom of Christ, Abraham sustains precisely the same relation to Jews and Gentiles. Simple faith is sufficient to authorize the Gentiles to claim him as their father. And the only relation recognized by the gospel which even his natural descendants sustain to him, results from the same cause: and this is independent of the institution of circumcision for the obvious reason, that that institution had not been introduced when the ground of this relationship was established.

In confirmation of this position the apostle in verses 13–18, appeals to the *promise* by which Abraham was formally constituted the father of the faithful, (comp. vs. 16, 17), and shows that this had no connexion with the law enjoining circumcision. "For it was not through the law that the promise was to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world,"—or that 'in him all the families of the earth should be blessed,' (comp. ver. 17),—"but through the righteousness of faith." By the law to which allusion is here had, and which is contrasted with the gratuitous promise which Abraham received respecting his spiritual seed, is probably meant the ritual and other observances enjoined on him and his posterity. Circumcision in the time of the apostle was usually spoken of as belonging to the law of Moses;—see Acts 15: 1–5; Gal. 5: 2–6;—and in this particular the law was represented as extending back in its requirements to the time of Abraham. John 7: 22, 23. Hence it is entirely natural that the apostle in speaking of Abraham

in respect to his circumcision, should represent him as interested in the law, and should place in contrast with the claim to the divine favor which he might be supposed to have acquired by obedience to its requisitions, his righteousness by faith. The promise was not through the law, inasmuch as it had been given to Abraham, and the relation between him and his spiritual seed which it contemplated, accordingly established, (comp. vs. 10–12), before the law in any of its observances was introduced. "The covenant," says Dr. Barnes commenting on ver. 13, "was made *before* the law of circumcision was given, and long before the law of Moses, (comp. Gal. 3: 16, 17, 18), and was independent of both."

"For if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise rendered of no effect," ver. 14. The law made the enjoyment of its promised blessings *conditional.* It prescribed, for example, that "the uncircumcised manchild should be cut off from his people." Gen. 17: 14. Now if compliance with certain conditions of the law are necessary for inheriting the promise, then faith is clearly *insufficient,* and consequently "void;" and the promise is ineffectual, for the obvious reason that the enjoyment of its blessings depends not on itself, but on the observances of the law. "For the law worketh wrath." It shuts out from favor those who do not comply with its requisitions. See Gen. 17: 14. "Therefore it is by faith," and not on conditions prescribed by the law, "that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed,"—the seed to whom the promise relates,—"not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham,"—not to that portion of the seed merely who belong to the

number of his natural descendants to whom the law was given, but to those also whose *only* relation to him is that acquired by faith. It thus appears that simple faith is, under the gospel, the all sufficient requisite of relationship to Abraham, "who in the sight" or estimation "of God, is the father of us all; as it is written, 'A father of many nations have I constituted thee.'"

From the foregoing examination it is obvious that the passage is in several distinct points of light, a decisive refutation of the principles of pedobaptism.

1. It establishes the fact that *all relation to Abraham recognized by the gospel is independent of the law or covenant of circumcision.* Pedobaptism assumes that relationship to Abraham in the Christian church, implies an interest in the covenant of circumcision recorded Gen. 17, and that its requisitions are consequently binding on all who hold such relationship. With this assumption the argument of the apostle is directly at variance. He shows that Abraham was constituted "*the father*" of all who are related to him under the gospel, whether Jews or Gentiles, while yet uncircumcised,—before the law or covenant of circumcision was given; and therefore independently of its provisions or requirements. Their relationship, their privileges, their state in every respect, would have been the same, had that law or covenant never existed,—except as we regard it a means of keeping the descendants of Israel a distinct people until the coming of the Messiah. From this conclusion, if the argument of the apostle be duly considered, we see no possibility of escaping. If, therefore, the covenant of circumcision is of force among the members of the Christian church, it must

be so for some other reason than that they are the seed of Abraham, and entitled to the blessings which such a relation involves.

2. The correctness of this conclusion will be further obvious, if we consider the *object* of the apostle's argument, viz. to show that circumcision on the part of christians is *unnecessary*. The Judaizing Christians contended that "it was needful to circumcise" all who were converted to Christianity, especially on the ground that they could not be saved without it. See Acts 15: 1, 5, 24; Gal. 2: 14–16; 5: 2, 3. This position the apostle undertakes to refute. And he evidently designs to show,—as in Gal. 2: 14–16; 5: 1–6; 6: 12–15; Phil. 3: 2–7; etc.,—that circumcision is unnecessary, in such a sense as not to be obligatory. He maintains that there is no difference on gospel ground between the circumcised and the uncircumcised. Chap. 2: 25–28; 3: 22, 29, 30. Abraham is "the father of all who believe *though they be not circumcised.*" The apostle would not, certainly, have said,—'though they live in disobedience to God.' His language can be explained only on the admission that he intended to indicate that circumcision need not be observed. And his argument is this,—The relation which christians sustain to Abraham, no less than the blessings involved therein, is independent of the law of circumcision; *therefore* that law is not a matter with which they are concerned; it may be entirely disregarded. Now *if this argument be valid*, it will apply to any rite supposed to have come in the room of circumcision, or which is administered on the same grounds. If it be sufficient to show that *circumcision* need not be observed, it is equally conclusive against any other practice which rests on the same authority; and if infant baptism, as

is contended, has taken the place of infant circumcision, we have the reasoning of the apostle directly to the point that it is *not required.* It is self-evident, if the original rite be not required *for the reasons assigned,* the same is true of the substitute. The stream cannot rise above its fountain. And we must either assume that the apostle reasons inconclusively, or we must admit that the law or covenant of circumcision is in no respect obligatory on christians.

3. The passage further shows that the covenant of circumcision cannot, from its very *nature,* be of force under the gospel. From Gen. 17, we learn that Jehovah, *after repeating the gracious promise which he had previously made to Abraham as an individual,* and in which his spiritual seed are interested, proceeds to establish between him and his *natural descendants,* or "his seed after him in their generations," on the one hand, and Himself, on the other, a covenant which is called in the New Testament "the covenant of circumcision." Acts 7: 8. A distinguishing feature of this covenant was that it was *conditional.* "The uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." Gen. 17: 14. Now we appeal to the candid reader if it is not the express design of the apostle to show that this covenant, such as it really is, is neither in its letter, nor *in its spirit,* applicable to those who are the spiritual seed of Abraham. Is it not placed in direct contrast with the promise on which their relation to him is predicated, and which, except so far as it becomes available on the exercise of faith, is *without conditions.* The promise with all its blessings, is to them, no less than to him, solely "through the righteousness of faith," ver. 13. If then *the covenant itself* is not of force, certainly *its*

requisitions, as such, cannot be binding. And the rite of circumcision, if obligatory on christians, either as originally given, or in the form of a substitute, must be so for some other reason than any contained in the covenant recorded Gen. 17.

4. The passage establishes the fact that *the gospel recognizes no relation, either to Abraham, or to the Christian church, that is not acquired by faith.* Under the former dispensation the entire Jewish nation sustained a covenant relation to God, by virtue of which they were entitled to certain peculiar privileges. To this fact particular allusion is made in chap. 3: 1, 2. The Jews as those who had been circumcised, enjoyed advantages which did not pertain to other nations. The promises of God to them as a people were fulfilled without regard to the fact that many of them were destitute of true faith, vs. 3, 4. Comp. chap. 11: 28, 29. The apostle, however, teaches that all such distinctions and privileges are of no avail as affording any claim to the peculiar blessings of the gospel involved in justification before God. Chap. 2: 17–23. All relation involving *the special favor of God*, implied in the term "Jew" as used in chap 2: 28, 29,—depends not on "*outward*" and *natural* circumstances or connexions, but on *personal* and "*inward*" qualities, vs. 28, 29. Every man is treated according to his *individual* deserts. Chap. 2: 6, 9, 10, 11. As "all have sinned," chap. 3: 23; so "the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all, and upon *all them that believe;* for there is no difference," vs. 22, 26. Abraham is the father, not of those who are connected with him merely by natural descent, but of those who *walk in the steps of his faith*, ver. 12. The promise of gospel blessings becomes available, not on principles

embraced in the law including the rite of circumcision, but simply on the exercise of faith, vs. 13–16. Righteousness is imputed to us only on condition that we individually "believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," ver. 24.

The conditions on which special privileges were enjoyed under the former dispensation are thus *directly contrasted* with those required by the gospel. In the one case, those related to Abraham by natural generation, among whom infants were *necessarily* included, were regarded as the people of God, and were interested in the covenant which he had made with them *as a nation.* In the other, *an entirely different principle of relationship is applied,*—a principle that is not only independent of, but incompatible with the acquiring of relationship by natural generation. Those only who become the children of Abraham *by faith*, are counted for his seed.

Is it said, that the apostle is speaking of those only who are *justified* by the gospel; and consequently of such as are capable of believing? We admit it; and add, that he represents *these*, and these *only*, as being "*the seed*" to whom the promise pertains. They are the children of Abraham *because* they are believers, and thus walk in his steps. A relationship to him cannot exist on the part of any individual, before it is *acquired;* and it is acquired only by faith. On this principle the promise of justification, (comp. vs. 11, 13, 14, 22-25) becomes "*sure* to *all* the seed," from among both Jews and Gentiles, ver. 16. If, therefore, the infant offspring of christians are the seed of Abraham, they will *surely* be justified and saved;—nay, they have, of necessity, already become like Abraham, in the exercise of faith in God. The gospel knows of no

relation to him on the part of any, whether infants or adults, who are not the subjects of faith. It regards nothing as a title to its distinguishing privileges but *personal* and *spiritual* qualifications.

The argument of the apostle, as thus exhibited, furnishes a refutation of pedobaptism that is eminently conclusive and practical. Is it assumed that christians by being the spiritual seed of Abraham, are interested in the covenant of circumcision, and entitled to what is regarded as its sealing rite? and that the same is true of all who are connected with them by natural generation? It is not necessary to urge in reply, that the requisitions of that covenant are not, and cannot be, by christians, in many particulars, reduced to practice;—that they extended to none but the males of the nation, and of these, to all bought with money, or born in the house whether servants or children;—that circumcision was required on the eighth day, and was observed as a badge of nationality. On facts of this kind, however conclusive they may be, it is not necessary to insist. We have the explicit and authoritative decision of the apostle upon the point. He has called attention to the subject for the express purpose of showing that there is no ground for the assumption. He has shown that the covenant of circumcision, both from its *nature*, and the time and circumstances of its *introduction*, cannot be of force in the Christian church, and that consequently its requisitions are not obligatory; in fine, that all relation to Abraham, and all claim to the special favor of God, under the gospel, are acquired upon different principles from those that applied in the observance of the Jewish institutions, are the result, not of natural generation or external circumstances, but solely of personal faith or regeneration.

We thus find the apostle, not merely withholding the expression of any sentiment that could fairly be adduced in favor of admitting infants to baptism and church membership, but actually engaged in *directly opposing* the ground on which the practice is defended, and establishing principles which *positively exclude* it from all place in the kingdom of Christ.

SECTION VIII.

THE SAME ARGUMENT CONTINUED.—BAPTISM ITSELF APPEALED TO IN REFUTATION OF PEDOBAPTISM.

THE evidence already adduced in refutation of the ground on which infant baptism is defended, or in proof of the position that no one is connected with the kingdom of Christ, or entitled to its ordinances, by virtue of relations acquired by natural birth, might surely suffice for every purpose of conviction. We may be allowed, however, to call attention to two or three additional passages, which, besides inculcating the same doctrine, refer in confirmation of its truth to *baptism itself.*

We first notice the language of the apostle in Col. 2: 11–14. In ver. 14, he speaks of Christ as "*blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances*, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and *taking it out of the way*, nailing it to his cross." Among these ordinances the rite of circumcision was evidently in his conception, included. This is obvious from verses 11, 12, of which ver. 14 is an amplification. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by

the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead." Comp. Rom. 10: 9. The apostle,—so far is he from intimating that the rite of circumcision is in substance continued in the Christian church, having only been changed in form, or that baptism has been introduced as a substitute for circumcision,—teaches, that the circumcision of Christ,—the only circumcision that he requires, or that is recognized in his kingdom,—is "made without hands," is spiritual, and consists in "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." In confirmation of this position he appeals to *baptism*, in which the subject in being buried, professes that he is dead, that like one who has *put off his body in death*, so he has put off the body of his sins, and has entered upon a new state of existence. The contrast indicated in the passage is not between two external rites, one of which may be disregarded since the other has been introduced in its stead; but rather the reverse. That which is made *with hands*, the Jewish circumcision, is not required, *because* that which is made *without hands*, the circumcision of Christ, has been experienced. Comp. Eph 2: 11. That this is the argument of the apostle will not, we presume, be disputed. But *if this reasoning be conclusive* in showing that the rite of *circumcision* is unnecessary, it is conclusive against any rite that is supposed to have come in the room of circumcision, or which is administered on the same grounds. It is obvious, a rite designed as a badge of natural relationship to Abraham, can have no place in an economy where such relationship is not recognized, where *spiritual* qualifications alone are of any avail. That this is the nature of the Christian economy, is

evident from baptism, the ordinance whereby an interest in this economy is indicated, in which the subjects invariably profess that they are new creatures, that they have become dead to sin, and have risen with Christ to a new and holy life. Comp. Rom. 6: 1–11. Baptism, as indicative of the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ, is consequently proof that circumcision, and the grounds on which it was practiced, have been entirely set aside. If infants, therefore, are baptized, it must be done for reasons which the very ordinance itself properly administered, clearly indicates have ceased to exist!

Another passage of kindred import occurs in the epistle to the Galatians. The apostle endeavors to prove, by a course of argument similar to that adopted Rom. 4: 9–18, that a natural relationship to Abraham is not known in the gospel, chap. 3: 6–9; that the only relationship recognized, is acquired by faith. "They who are *of faith* are blessed with faithful Abraham,"—"are *the children of Abraham*," verses 7, 9. The promise of gospel blessings (vs. 8, 18), is made only to Christ and those who by faith become united to him as members of the same body, vs. 16, 22, 28, 29. Those who become *his*, are "the children of God," and "the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise," vs. 26, 29. In this designation those who, *like the Jews*, are merely "*born after the flesh*,"—or without the special interposition of God, which under the gospel is regeneration by the Spirit,—are not included, chap. 4: 27–31. A connexion with Abraham by natural generation, or independently of personal faith in Christ and vital union with him, is thus repeatedly, and in various forms of expression, declared

to be unknown in the kingdom of Christ. And in illustration or confirmation of this position, the apostle appeals to the import and use of *baptism*. Chap 3: 26, 27. "Ye are all the children of God," not by any natural connexion with Abraham, (comp. vs. 7, 9, 22,) but simply "by faith in Christ Jesus." Comp. vs. 9, 14. Proof of this is contained in the fact that "as many of you as have been baptized into Christ," in obedience to his appointment, "have," without regard to any such connexion, "put on Christ," and are consequently to be recognized as christians in full fellowship. The fact that you have all alike, without distinction of natural descent, been received to baptism, an ordinance instituted by Christ, and administered by his authority, is evidence that no such distinction exists. That this is essentially the argument of the apostle, we think admits of no doubt.

Is it said that infants are entitled to baptism by virtue of their natural relation to their parents, and through them to Abraham? The apostle here appeals to baptism itself in proof that no such relation is recognized in the gospel; that those who, like the Jews, are simply "born after the flesh," are not acknowledged as the seed of Abraham. And that which declares that the ground of a practice does not exist, cannot, certainly, be properly used as a means of continuing that practice!

Equally conclusive is the argument of the apostle in his epistle to the Ephesians. Having reminded his brethren that they were saved by grace through faith, he directs their attention to the fact that as Gentiles they were "called Uncircumcision by those who were called the Circumcision in the flesh made with hands."

Chap. 2: 11. In connexion with this implied allusion to a circumcision which is "of the heart in the spirit," and "made without hands," and which is alone of any avail in the kingdom of Christ, he observes, that the Gentile Christians, who had formerly been excluded from the privileges of the people of God, had been brought nigh by the blood of Christ, ver. 13. The blessings of the gospel were offered equally to Jews and Gentiles. The "wall of partition," or the distinction which had formerly existed between them, had been obliterated, ver. 14. The "enmity," or that which excluded the Gentiles from favor, and designated them as aliens, to wit, "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," had been abolished, ver. 15. Both had been made "one," or brought together in "one body." Peace or union had been effected by the creation of one *new* man in Christ, ver. 15. Among the ordinances the abolishing of which had broken down the middle wall of partition, that most prominent in the apostle's view was evidently circumcision. To this as marking the distinction which had existed between Jews and Gentiles, he particularly refers in the preceding context, ver. 11. This, then, we have his express testimony, has been abolished; and that not merely as an external rite, but in as far as it was an indication and means of partition, or separation, or distinction. Not merely has its form been set aside; but its design, its use, its effect, have been superseded by the gospel. This the apostle, if his language be not destitute of meaning, distinctly asserts.

Is it pretended that a portion of the human family are, from their birth, to be distinguished from the remainder? that they are to receive a rite of the same import as circumcision, and be numbered among the

people of God? The apostle has established the position that all such walls of separation, all such distinctions, all such ordinances, have been done away. His argument to this effect is equally decisive, whether it be contended that the rite of circumcision has been continued in the Christian church with a change of name and form, or that another ordinance of the same import, and to be administered on the same principles, has been introduced in its stead. The *reason* for its observance has ceased to exist. All now stand on the same ground. All are entitled to the same privileges on the same terms. One is not a member of Christ's kingdom on the ground of faith, while another can claim membership without faith. One does not belong to "the household of God" by virtue of regeneration, while another is connected therewith on the ground of natural generation. All become members, and enjoy the privileges of membership, on the same conditions.

The apostle, having thus in chap. 2, established the position that christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, have been constituted *one new man* in Christ; that "both have been reconciled *in one body*,"—the law of commandments contained in ordinances, by which peculiar privileges were enjoyed in consequence of natural descent, having been abolished,—reverts, in chap. 4, to the same subject, and appeals in confirmation of his position to the *baptism* of christians. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*," vs. 4, 5. "There is one body." All christians are, without respect to nation or descent, united to Christ, and entitled to the same privileges. This is evident, inasmuch as they are all endowed with one Spirit; they have all been called in one hope; they have all ac-

knowledged one Lord; they have all embraced one faith; they have all submitted to one baptism. The fact that they have all been baptized by divine authority into the same profession, and on the same principles, is proof that they all belong equally to "one body," and without distinction of nation or circumstances, are entitled to equal privileges.

Now on the supposition that baptism is to be administered on the principles of pedobaptism, the facts and conclusions in the case would be directly the reverse. Baptism would then be proof that the distinctions which existed under the former dispensation, instead of being done away, were still preserved:—for although the subjects of them might be somewhat changed, the general principle would continue in all its force. Instead of showing that the ordinances indicative of these distinctions have been abolished, it would be itself an instance of their perpetuation. Instead of teaching that all are now entitled to the same privileges, and received on the same terms, it would be proof that some by virtue of their natural descent were entitled to peculiar privileges, and that the terms of admission to the church in the case of some, were essentially different from what they were in the case of others. Instead of illustrating the fact that in the one body there is but one Spirit, it would show that many of the members were avowedly destitute of the Spirit. Instead of indicating that all have been called in one hope, it would prove that many had not been called at all, and were destitute of all hope. Instead of implying the acknowledgment of one Lord, it would be evidence that some had not yet become acquainted with the Lord Jesus. Instead of being the profession of one faith, it would denote that a portion of its sub-

jects were entirely destitute of faith. Instead of being itself one baptism, it would be essentially and clearly two. Administered to different classes of subjects, upon different grounds, for different purposes, with different qualifications, and under different circumstances in almost every particular, it could not certainly, without involving a contradiction, be considered "*one* baptism." The apostle speaks of one baptism, not in respect to its form and name merely, but in a sense which implies that the subjects of it are united in acknowledging the same Lord, and in professing the same faith, the same hope, the same holy calling. If baptism is one in these particulars, it is absurd to contend that it can be properly administered where all of these are wanting. Or if baptism is evidence, that, while its subjects are united on the same terms in one body, the distinctions arising from natural relationship have been done away, it is the height of inconsistency to administer it on the very ground that these distinctions still exist.*

SECTION IX.

THE IRRELEVANCY OF THE ARGUMENT FOR PEDOBAPTISM DRAWN FROM THE SALVATION OF INFANTS.

IT will be objected, perhaps, to the reasoning advanced in proof that infants are not to be recognized as members of the kingdom of Christ, that it precludes the hope of their salvation. A little examination, however, will show that such an objection is utterly groundless. We trust we shall be able to make it per-

* Note H, Appendix.

fectly clear, that the salvation of those who die in infancy may be maintained, without impairing, or in any way affecting, the arguments adduced in refutation of infant baptism and church membership.

1. The specific proposition established in the preceding sections, is, that the kingdom of Christ requires in its members *spiritual* qualifications, in distinction from those acquired by natural birth. In this it differs from the Hebrew commonwealth, in which to be *born* of Hebrew parents, was a *prescribed* qualification for membership. And as this was possessed in infancy, no less than in manhood, it was appropriate that the sign of recognition should be then applied. But with respect to the kingdom of Christ all mankind as born into the world, sustain precisely the same relations. By nature they are alike destitute of that character which is essential to membership. Nor will they, dying in infancy, be saved, in consequence of any thing that they possess by nature. They will never be admitted to heaven by virtue of what they inherit from their parents. For, aside from the fact that their salvation will be effected purely by *grace*, independently of considerations arising from their natural relationship, it is evident they can never be confirmed in the bliss of heaven, unless that predisposition, or bias, or tendency to evil, which leads those who grow up into life, invariably to pursue the ways of sin, is removed or eradicated; and this is equivalent to their being *born again* or *regenerated*. It is only on condition of this change that their salvation can be predicated. So that it is true, without limitation, that the prescribed qualifications for membership in the kingdom of Christ, are, *not natural*, or those acquired by natural birth, but *spiritual*, or those resulting from the special manifesta-

tion of the grace of God, and the actual impartation of holiness.

Hence it appears that the salvation of infants, while it is speciously urged in defence of their right to church membership, leads us, in reality, to a conclusion directly the opposite. The argument properly stated stands thus,—*As natural relationship is of no avail in procuring for infants admittance to heaven, it gives them no title to membership in the church on earth.*

2. The fallacy of the objection under consideration will appear in a still stronger light, if we consider that in the salvation of infants God acts as a *Sovereign;* in the recognition of individuals as members of his kingdom on earth, and in their introduction into the visible church, he requires his people to act in view of certain specified *evidences.* As in the Jewish commonwealth it was necessary that there should be satisfactory evidence that an individual possessed the requisite qualifications for membership, before he could be recognized as a member; so in the kingdom of Christ. But in the latter this evidence is of such a nature, that it cannot possibly exist in the case of infants. It consists in the *manifestation* of a spiritual change in the character. The only criterion by which we can judge that an individual is regenerated, is that he "repents and believes the gospel." Faith and repentance are accordingly, on the part of those to whom this evidence pertains, indispensable conditions of salvation.

3. Many of the arguments advanced in the preceding sections, are entirely independent of any question pertaining to the salvation of infants; as, for example, the proposition that the only circumcision known among christians is spiritual, or that which pertains to the heart; and that, consequently, the old Jewish cir-

cumcision is, alike in form and substance, abolished. The same is true of the argument drawn from Rom. 4: 9–18, to wit, that the only relationship to Abraham recognized by the gospel, is acquired by faith, and is independent of the law of circumcision; and that hence no authority can be derived from that law for the baptism of infants. But especially is this apparent in passages which appeal to baptism. If baptism is to be administered on principles which utterly discard all distinctions arising from birth or natural descent, the ground on which the baptism of infants is practiced, is surely precluded, even were we to admit that such distinctions will be regarded in their salvation.

SECTION X.

THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS THE EXCLUSIVE PRACTICE OF THE APOSTLES AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.—THE TESTIMONY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THAT none but believers in Christ are entitled to Christian baptism, is further evident from the testimony of the New Testament respecting *the practice of the apostles and primitive Christians.* It is clear that they uniformly required satisfactory evidence of repentance and faith, as a prerequisite to baptism.

The apostles, in writing to the churches which had been planted under their direction, invariably address them as consisting of those who had obtained like precious faith with themselves, who had been called to be saints, who were sanctified in Christ Jesus. 2 Pet. 1: 1; 1 Cor. 1: 2. Such was the character which they had professed in their baptism. The Christians in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and

Bithynia, addressed by the apostle Peter, had submitted to baptism as "the answer of a good conscience toward God." 1 Pet. 1: 1; 3: 21. The members of the church at Ephesus in becoming the subjects of one baptism, had, as we have previously noticed, acknowledged one Lord, and professed one faith. Eph. 4: 5. The disciples at Collosse in being baptized, had signified that they had risen with Christ through faith. Col. 2: 12. Those who had received Christian baptism at Rome, had professed to be dead to sin, and alive to God through Jesus Christ. Rom. 6: 3–11.

In perfect accordance with this testimony, so explicit and decisive, are the occasional historical allusions to baptism in the Acts of the Apostles. "The Corinthians, hearing, *believed*, and were baptized." The Samaritans "when they *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, were baptized both men and women." Chap. 18: 8; 8: 12. See also chap. 8: 37, 38; 10: 47; 2: 41. These passages are sufficiently explicit in designating the only proper subjects of baptism. Had the apostles on the day of Pentecost, for example, baptized the families or infant children of those who were converted, it would hardly have been said simply, "Then they that *gladly received the word*, were baptized; and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls; and *they continued steadfast.*" Can any one read Acts 2: 37–42; 8: 12, and believe that there were infants among the number baptized? Is not such a supposition actually *precluded?*

But the most interesting and decisive evidence upon this point, is derived from passages which speak of *the baptism of households.*

It is perfectly clear that those belonging to the

households whose baptism is recorded in the New Testament, were not infants, but persons who were capable of acting for themselves, and who, as such, had given evidence of conversion.

We first notice the household of Lydia. Acts 16: 14, 15. Lydia is introduced as a woman of Thyatira, sojourning at Philippi for purposes of trade. She is represented as acting for herself, dependent on no one, amenable to no one. The natural inference, therefore, is, that she had no husband. But, it being improbable that a female would have left her home, and repaired to a distant city, and engaged in the sale of merchandise, unprotected and alone, we naturally conclude, upon meeting with the statement in verse 14, that she had with her assistants in her business. The allusion in verse 15 to her "household" is, therefore, precisely what we had anticipated. We at once refer the term to those who we had previously inferred must have been engaged as her assistants. The idea of infant children is not even suggested to our minds. This, we believe, is the only natural and rational view of the case. And in the absence of all evidence to the contrary, we are bound, on all consistent principles of interpretation, to conclude that such were the facts. Her household upon their conversion, would, of course, sympathize with her in her feelings of christian affection and hospitality; and this would operate as a reason with the apostles for making her house their home. It is accordingly said, "When she was baptized and *her household*, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me faithful to the Lord, *come into my house, and abide there.*" Had her household continued opposed to the gospel, and addicted to their former practices, the invitation would not probably

have been given, much less accepted. But when not only herself, but her household avowed themselves christians, by being baptized, all objection in the minds of the apostles to accepting the invitation, would be removed.

We have, then, sufficient ground for the conclusion that the household of Lydia were capable of believing the gospel, and were baptized on profession of their faith, even without reference to the fact mentioned in a subsequent verse, to wit, that the apostles, upon being released from prison, entered into the house of Lydia, and when they had seen *the brethren, comforted* them.

Concerning the household of the Jailor, there certainly can be no ground for dispute, since it is expressly recorded, "And he *rejoiced believing in God with all his house.*" Acts 16: 31–34.

Of Crispus it is said, that "he believed on the Lord *with all his house:*" and although their baptism is not expressly mentioned, it may safely be inferred; inasmuch as they are associated with "many of the Corinthians," who "hearing, believed, and were baptized." Acts 18: 8.

Respecting the household of Stephanas mentioned 1 Cor. 1: 16, it may be observed, that they are introduced as those who were interested in the instructions of the apostle to the church at Corinth, and in chap. 16: 15, 16, it is expressly stated that they were *the first fruits of Achaia, and had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.*"

It thus appears that the households mentioned in the New Testament as having been baptized, consisted of those who were subjects of faith. The evidence derived from these examples is, therefore, entirely in favor of believers' baptism.

It is, moreover, a fact generally overlooked, that an interesting argument may be drawn from this source *in opposition* to the baptism of any except believers.

1. It is worthy of notice that as often as the baptism of households is mentioned in the New Testament, it is,—with one exception, where the fact is clearly indicated by the accompanying circumstances,—*expressly stated*, that they consisted *only of believers*. Had it simply been recorded that they were baptized, we should naturally have inferred, that, as in other cases, they had believed. But the inspired record has not left us to satisfy ourselves with an inference, however well grounded. It has directly informed us that in the case of households, no less than of isolated individuals, faith was required as a prerequisite to baptism. It thus appears from the express testimony of the sacred historian, that *there was no exception to baptism on profession of personal faith, even in the only cases in which an exception is claimed.*

2. The members of these households are introduced in the character of *individual agents, the subjects of a personal and independent responsibility.* It is said, not merely that Crispus believed, but that all his house believed with him. The members of his family are mentioned, not as those who became connected with the church upon his conversion, but as so many additional converts to Christianity. The same is true of the household of the jailor. Acts 16: 34. Special notice is also taken of the fact, that when Paul and Silas were brought out of the prison by the jailor, "they *spake the word of the Lord* to him, and to *all that were in his house*," ver. 32. They looked upon the members of his household, whether servants or children, as occupying precisely the same position in

respect to the claims and privileges of Christianity with himself. They were individual and accountable agents, whose state and relationship would be decided solely by their own acceptance or rejection of the gospel. It is incredible, in view of the statement made verse 32, that those connected with the jailor's household, would, in case they had manifested no disposition to receive the word, have been baptized, and introduced into the Christian church.

3. The simple fact that the baptism of these households was deemed worthy of special record, is strong presumptive evidence that household baptism was not the common practice of the apostles. The natural inference is, that there was in these instances something unusual; that there was no custom, to say the least, prevalent among the primitive Christians, from which it might be inferred, that upon the conversion of the head of a family, the other members were baptized.

The examples of the baptism of households recorded in the New Testament, therefore, not only are instances of believers' baptism, but they afford an interesting proof *against* the baptism of infants.

The evidence that infant baptism was unknown among the apostles, derived both from the Acts and the Epistles, we consider perfectly decisive. If as many as were baptized in connexion with the primitive churches, were supposed to put on Christ, were such as had gladly received his word, believed on his name, and risen with him to newness of life, infant baptism surely was *not practiced.*

SECTION XI.

INFANT BAPTISM SHOWN TO BE NOT OF APOSTOLIC ORIGIN FROM THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

THE position established in the preceding section, is abundantly sustained by *the history of baptism subsequently to the apostolic age*. The Christian writers of the first and second centuries, in alluding to baptism, uniformly speak of it as administered on a voluntary profession of discipleship to Christ.* Justin Martyr, for example, describes those who were baptized in his day, A. D. 140, as persons who *believed* the truths of Christianity, and *promised to live according to them*. Clement of Alexandria, also, in his frequent allusions to baptism, invariably represents it as administered to those who were in possession of *faith* and *divine illumination*. The first writer who mentions infant baptism is Tertullian, about the beginning of *the third century*. From his treatise on Baptism, we learn that instances had begun to occur, in which "little children" were admitted to baptism before they had received a "knowledge of Christ." The practice being once introduced, its spread among the *African* churches, as may be inferred from the notices of it by Origen and Cyprian, was somewhat rapid; although, as appears from passages in the writings of Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, and others,—to some of which we shall have occasion to refer hereafter,—it did not become general in the Eastern and Western churches, until toward the close of the fourth century.

All attempts to trace back the origin of infant baptism beyond the close of the second century, have been

* Note I. Appendix.

unsuccessful. It stands, in a historical point of view, upon the same ground as a multitude of other superstitious customs, which originated in a departure from the primitive simplicity of the gospel, and which gradually prepared the way for the great apostasy.

But, while there is nothing in the early history of the church to justify the opinion that infant baptism is of apostolic origin, there is much that proves conclusively that it did NOT originate with the apostles.

1. We first notice the lateness of the period at which it makes its appearance, and especially, at which it became generally prevalent. On the supposition it had been introduced by Christ or his apostles, a great portion of those who belonged to the churches during the second century, as they were born of Christian parents, must have been baptized in infancy. How happens it, then, that the writers of this period, in speaking of those to whom baptism was administered, uniformly describe them as believers? Why do they speak of themselves and their fellow Christians, without exception or qualification, as having been baptized on profession of their conscious and voluntary acceptance of the gospel? Why do they invariably assert of the whole, what, on the supposition, they knew to be true only of a part? Or, why do we find the first traces of infant baptism in Africa, while in the Eastern and Western churches it did not become general until more than a hundred and fifty years later? Such are precisely the facts which might be expected if infant baptism be regarded an innovation; but they are utterly irreconcilable with the supposition that it originated with the apostles, and had all along been observed on their authority.

2. That infant baptism is not of apostolic origin is

further evident from the light in which it was viewed after its appearance. Origen, who is the first writer that defends it, observes, that the reason for it was matter of "frequent inquiries among the brethren." They evidently did not understand how the design of baptism could be met in its administration to infants. As late as the time of Cyprian, A. D. 250, it was undecided, even in the African churches, whether it were proper to baptize a child before the eighth day. Had infant baptism been instituted by the apostles, we see not how this point could have remained so long unsettled.

In the Eastern churches, at a much later period, the propriety of baptizing infants was not generally understood. Gregory Nazianzen, in one of his discourses, supposes he may be asked to express his *opinion* on this point; and in reply, he advises that unconscious infants be baptized in cases of apparent *danger*; "inasmuch as it were better that they should be *sanctified* without their knowing it, than that they should die without being sealed and initiated." In other cases he advises that their baptism be deferred until they are of sufficient age to receive impressions from a recital of the mystical words. Now on the supposition that infant baptism had been practiced by the churches for more than three hundred years on the authority of the apostles, is it conceivable that the bishop of Constantinople, the metropolis of the Eastern Empire, could have regarded his audience as asking his opinion respecting its propriety? Is it possible that he should have replied as he did?

About the beginning of the fifth century, Boniface, in a letter to Augustine, suggests a variety of objections to the practice of baptizing infants, and requests a

statement of the grounds on which it may be justified. These objections are, that infants are incapable of evincing the feelings required of candidates for baptism;—that neither the present state of their minds, nor their future behavior, can be known;—that a profession of faith in their behalf is apparently unmeaning and inconsistent with facts. All this seems clearly to indicate that infant baptism was an innovation. Baptism had always been associated with a profession of submission to the gospel. And how it could be properly administered where such submission was impossible, needed explanation.

3. Another interesting proof of our position, is found in the testimony of Tertullian. Having occasion to allude to the baptism of little ones who had not yet acquired a knowledge of the gospel, he protests against it; which is in itself a strong indication that he looked upon it as an innovation. Had it been customary to regard it as an apostolic institution, "this father of tradition," as he is styled by Mr. Coleman in his Christian Antiquities, "would hardly have ventured," as Neander well observes, "to oppose it so warmly." His testimony, however, is chiefly valuable on account of his appeal to the *New Testament:* He defends the ground on which he opposes the practice, to wit, that the little ones had not yet learned Christ, and could not understand why they were baptized, by referring to the practice of the first teachers of Christianity, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. He is dissuading from the hasty administration of baptism; and he contends, in opposition to the arguments of his opponents, that in the instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament, as in the case of Saul, and of the Ethiopian, the baptized had been instructed in the gospel, and

had believed, or, at least, had given satisfactory evidence of conversion. *He endeavors to show that there is no warrant in the New Testament for administering the ordinance on any other conditions.* "It is, therefore," he adds, "more proper that baptism should be deferred according to the condition, the disposition, and the age of each individual, and *especially in the case of little ones.*" The reasoning of Tertullian is, that baptism ought not to be observed *in any case*, until there is satisfactory evidence that the candidate is *a sincere and steadfast christian*, and that hence there is a *special* impropriety in administering it to little children who cannot understand its meaning, who are unacquainted with Christ, and who, as they grow up into life, may become perverse and incorrigible. This he presents as the only position that can be maintained on the authority of the New Testament. Tertullian, then, not only opposes infant baptism as an impropriety, but he appeals to the New Testament and the practice of the first Christians, to establish the ground of his opposition. And it is a remarkable fact that he makes use of precisely the same argument, as has been made most prominent by the opposers of pedobaptism in every succeeding age.

4. Decisive proof that infant baptism was unknown in the church in the second century, is found in the writings of Justin Martyr, and of Clement of Alexandria. They not only mention believers simply, as its subjects, but they employ language which clearly shows that infants were *not* baptized. The state of Christians at the time they received baptism, is directly *contrasted* with that of infants.*

* The passages to which reference is here had, will be found quoted at length, and the argument deduced from them applied, in the Christian Review, No. XXII.

Justin, in a particular account of the manner in which Christians were baptized, alludes to the difference in their state at the time of their birth, and of their baptism. Then they were *involuntary* and *unconscious* with respect to what they experienced. But in their baptism they had *choice* and *knowledge* and *illumination*. Now had they been baptized in infancy, their state at the time, instead of being susceptible of contrast with what it was at their birth, would have been, in the particulars specified, precisely similar. They would have been as involuntary and unconscious with respect to their baptism, as with respect to their birth. Justin is speaking of what pertained to baptism as such; of what was, in profession, at least, inseparably connected with the ordinance, as appointed by Christ, and observed by the Christian church. Had infants been baptized, they must, in the view of Justin, have received a baptism essentially different from that which he describes, and which he represents as Christian baptism. Their involuntariness and unconsciousness in their baptism equally as in their birth, would have been viewed in direct contrast with the choice and knowledge which he represents himself, and his fellow Christians, as having enjoyed, when baptized.

Equally explicit and decisive is the representation of Clement. In his work entitled Pædagogus, after explaining on what grounds christians might, in accordance with the usage of the New Testament, be properly styled "children," he proceeds to prove in opposition to the insinuations of the Gnostics, that it was not on account of childishness and simplicity of knowledge. In proof of this he appeals to what was implied in their baptism. Their baptism was evidence, according to the representation of Clement,

that they had been "illuminated" and made "perfect in knowledge." They had received "catechetical instruction" previously to their baptism, and this had led to "faith;"—faith had been by the Holy Spirit wrought in their hearts, and that illumination, by which they had received a clear insight into divine things, "consummated," at the time of their baptism. They had thus been made "perfect christians, wanting nothing." Now on the supposition that a portion of those of whom Clement is speaking, had been baptized in infancy, the argument would have been directly the reverse. Instead of being *unlike* children for the reasons given, they would have been children in reality, and children, too, of an age not to be capable of instruction, or illumination, or faith, much less of maturity or perfection in Christian knowledge. Clement, then, may be regarded as affording positive testimony to the fact, that infant baptism did not prevail at that period.

5. Another interesting proof that infant baptism was unknown during the early ages of Christianity, is the fact, that those whose parents were Christians, were baptized, and admitted to the church, on the same conditions as those converted from heathenism. It was necessary that they, equally with others, should be *taught*, and give evidence of *faith*, in order that they might become *qualified* for baptism.

The Catechumens of the second century were, we believe it is universally admitted, persons in a course of Christian instruction preparatory or prerequisite to baptism. They differed from the regular members of the church in not having been baptized; and hence they were not allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper. In this class the children of Christians equally with those from the ranks of heathenism, were included.

The Encyclopedia Britannica, after describing the catechumens of the ancient church as those "who had some title to the common name of Christian,—though not consummated by baptism," adds,—"The children of believing parents were admitted catechumens as soon as ever they were capable of instruction, but at what age those born of heathen parents might be admitted is not so clear." Clement, as we have already shown, in repelling the charge of the Gnostics that Christians were justly styled "children" on account of simplicity in knowledge, alludes to the fact that they had enjoyed catechetical instruction preparatory to their baptism. As the charge was directed against Christians as such, those born of Christian parents, no less than those converted from heathenism, it is evident from the language of Clement they had alike been instructed in the principles of Christianity, as a prerequisite to baptism. And even after infants began to be baptized, the usual profession of knowledge and faith, demanded of catechumens, was still requisite, and was obtained in the case of those who were unable to answer for themselves, by sponsors testifying in their behalf;—a clear indication that the children of Christians, equally with others, had all along been regarded as belonging to the order of catechumens.

These facts prove conclusively that the earlier Christians knew nothing of infant baptism and church membership. It is evident they considered faith a necessary preparation for baptism in the case of their own children, no less than of the heathen. They acted on the principle that the members of Christian families, must, equally with others, be instructed, and be properly affected by the truths of the gospel, in order to become entitled to baptism. This fact is interesting,

not only as decisive proof that they did not consider their infant children qualified for baptism, but also as showing in what light they understood the instructions of Christ and his apostles respecting the necessity of faith as a prerequisite to baptism.

6. Another decisive proof that infant baptism was introduced subsequently to the apostolic age, is found in the customs that were at first connected with it.

Boniface in his letter to Augustine requests the reason, that, when infants are presented for baptism, their parents as sponsors for them, declare that "they do that of which their infant age is not able to think;" —when asked, for example, 'Does he believe in God?' they answer, 'He does believe.' "And so," he adds, "an answer is returned to all the rest." This, as is evident both from the language of Boniface, and the answer of Augustine, was the customary and prescribed usage in cases of infant baptism. Such a custom can be accounted for only on the admission, that it had always been considered an established principle that no one could be baptized except on profession of faith; that this principle had been settled by the apostles, and acted on by the church; and, as it could not be disregarded or set aside, an attempt was made to maintain it even in infant baptism. Had the baptism of infants as practiced at the present day, been introduced by Christ or his apostles, and established among the churches, it is unaccountable that it should ever have been imagined that the profession required of adults, was necessary in the case of infants.

Another custom connected with infant baptism from its first appearance was *infant communion*. Infants upon being baptized were fully constituted members

of the church, and were admitted at once to the Lord's Supper.

Gieseler, in his Ecclesiastical History, speaking of the period, A. D. 193–324, says, "All who had been baptized, even the children, partook of the Eucharist." Vol. I., p. 159.

In Coleman's Christian Antiquities, compiled chiefly from the works of Augusti, p. 309, it is stated, "Agreeably to all the laws and customs of the church, baptism constituted membership with the church. All baptized persons were legitimately numbered among the communicants, as members of the church. Accordingly the sacrament immediately followed the ordinance of baptism, that the members thus received might come at once into the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of christian fellowship. But in all these instances the baptized person is of necessity supposed to have been of adult age, capable of exercising faith, according to the injunction, 'Believe and be baptized.'

"After the general introduction of infant baptism, the sacrament continued to be administered to all who had been baptized, whether infants or adults. The reason assigned by Cyprian and others for this practice was, 'that age was no impediment; that the grace of God bestowed on the subjects of baptism, was given without measure and without any limitation as to age.' Augustine strongly advocates this practice, and for authority appeals to John 6: 53, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you.'

"The custom of infant communion continued for several centuries. It is mentioned in the third council of Tours, A. D. 813; and even the council of Trent, A. D. 1545, only decreed that it should not be consid-

ered essential to salvation. It is still scrupulously observed by the Greek church."

The sacrament continued to be administered to all who had been baptized, the same after as before the appearance of infant baptism. Not the slightest intimation of any change in this particular has been found in all the history of the ancient church. It was regarded as an established principle, that all who had been admitted to baptism, should be admitted to the other ordinance. We should find it impossible to account for this fact on the supposition that the baptism of infants had been instituted by the apostles, and the point that they were not to be admitted to the Lord's supper, definitely settled by their authority. It must, in that case, have been fully understood by the churches that there was a *distinction* to be made in the privileges of the baptized; that baptism did *not* entitle *infants* to the communion. And it would be unaccountable, that, in such a state of things, the advocates of infant baptism from the time of its appearance in the history of the church, should take it for granted, that baptism did in *all* cases give a right to the other ordinance. It being conceded that infants were not received to the Lord's Supper during the apostolic age, we believe it is impossible to account for the introduction of the practice, on any other ground than that it was introduced in connexion with infant baptism; and both, of course, at a later period.

We ask the reader attentively and candidly to consider the facts which have here been presented, and decide whether the evidence is not decisive, nay overwhelming, that infant baptism was unknown in the apostolic age. There is not merely nothing in the history of the church to lead to the conclusion that it

was then practiced; there is conclusive proof, arising from a variety of independent sources, that it had *not* yet been introduced.

SECTION XII.

THE CAUSES WHICH LED TO THE INTRODUCTION OF INFANT BAPTISM EXPLAINED.

NOTWITHSTANDING the facts presented in the preceding section, the question is sometimes asked with an air of confidence, If infant baptism is not of apostolic origin, how could it be introduced into the church, and finally become prevalent? A sufficient answer to this query is contained in the fact, that a variety of other customs whose apostolic origin is rejected, were introduced within less than a hundred years after the apostles, and soon became general. And there certainly can be no more difficulty in accounting for the origin of infant baptism, than for the introduction of these other anti-scriptural customs.

But, apart from any such consideration, we are,—so far from finding any difficulty in accounting for the introduction of infant baptism,—rather led to inquire, How could it have been prevented? If causes which it is admitted were in operation during the second century, had not led to it, we should, indeed, be unable to account for the failure. The only ground for surprise is, that no traces of the practice appear at an earlier period, and that it did not more rapidly become general.

It is generally admitted that before the middle of the second century the opinion began to prevail, that

baptism was in some way efficacious in procuring a removal of the guilt and pollution of sin.

It is also admitted that no age was specified at which children might be received into the number of catechumens.

It is likewise an acknowledged fact that the custom of having sponsors at the baptism of catechumens, was introduced during the second century. The Edinburgh Encyclopedia states, that "in the second century Christians began to be divided into believers, or such as were baptized, and catechumens, who were receiving instruction to qualify them for baptism. To answer for these persons, sponsors or god fathers were first instituted." It was the province of the sponsor to testify that in his opinion the catechumen was qualified for baptism, and to become virtually responsible to the church for his future good behavior.

Under these circumstances it could hardly fail that children of an early age would frequently be presented as fit subjects for baptism. The fondness of parents, especially upon their imbibing the notion that some mysterious saving benefit was connected with baptism, would naturally lead them to conclude, that their children while very young, were sufficiently instructed in the gospel, and impressed with its truths, to be baptized: and as it was provided that they should be presented by sponsors, who testified to their fitness, and promised to watch over their future course, so that the church should not suffer from their misconduct, the administrator could have but little hesitation in baptizing them. These being admitted, the tendency would be to gradually extend the privilege to such as were still younger; and no great length of time would elapse, before, in special cases at least, those just able to utter a few words of prayer, or answer a few simple

interrogations, would be baptized. It would then soon become a query, how the case of such could differ in respect to any essential qualifications for baptism, from that of mere infants. And if it were allowable to promise that the former should grow up worthy members of the church, no valid objection could be urged against a similar engagement with respect to the latter. We thus see how the practice of employing sponsors at the baptism of catechumens, might, by a process perfectly easy and natural, even in a single generation, lead to the baptism of infants.

Especially would such be the result wherever the sentiment became prevalent, that baptism was administered chiefly for purposes which would apply in the case of infants, no less than of adults. If it were to be observed, as Origen and many of the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries contended, not so much to profess a saving change, as to produce it;—not so much to declare a determination to walk in newness of life, as to procure the remission of sins, and a title to heaven, it could hardly fail that infants would be regarded as proper subjects.

As long as baptism continued to be observed for the purposes, and on the conditions, specified in the New Testament,—none being admitted except on their *own* profession of faith evinced by its proper fruits,—infant baptism was unknown; nor could it, under such circumstances, have been introduced. But when the custom began to prevail of baptizing catechumens chiefly on the testimony and responsibility of sponsors, and, in addition to this, it was conceived, that the design and benefits of baptism were such, as to require no distinction to be made between infants and adults, infant baptism was the inevitable result.

The introduction of infant baptism at a period subsequent to the apostolic age, is thus easily explained. Indeed, in view of the causes, which, it is admitted, actually existed, we see not how it could have been prevented.

Perhaps it may be thought, that the consideration of this point is entirely gratuitous. It certainly was not demanded by any just principles of argumentation. It might have sufficed, for every purpose of rational conviction, to have shown, that there is no satisfactory evidence in the history of the church, that infant baptism originated with the apostles. We supposed, however, it would place the subject in a still more interesting and convincing light, to present a few distinct and prominent facts directly *disproving* the apostolic origin of the practice. For the same reason we have advanced a step further, and have shown how its introduction at a later period, may, as the natural and apparently unavoidable result of existing causes, be actually accounted for. We commend our suggestions on this point to the careful and candid consideration of the reader.

SECTION XIII.

A GENERAL AND CONNECTED VIEW OF THE ARGUMENTS PRESENTED IN THE PRECEDING SECTIONS.

Our examination of baptism with respect to *its subjects*, is now completed. The position that believers only are proper subjects, has been proved by an appeal to *the design of baptism*. Not a use of the ordinance specified in the New Testament, is met in its administration to unbelievers and infants. Indeed, its design

is thus directly set aside and contravened. We have appealed to *the nature and design of the kingdom of Christ;* and have shown that it is eminently personal and spiritual in its requirements, and qualifications for membership. It includes none but such as have believed in Christ, and have been transformed by the renewing of their minds, and consequently leaves no place for the baptism and church membership of infants. We have appealed to the instructions of Christ and his apostles respecting *the requisite qualifications for baptism and visible church membership;* and have found that believers, and believers only, are specified as the proper subjects. We have even shown by reference to numerous passages in the New Testament, that those who are merely "born of the flesh," do *not* belong to the kingdom of Christ; that relations acquired by natural birth, which is all that can be affirmed of infants, are positively declared to be of no avail as qualifications for membership; and that in this respect the Christian dispensation is directly contrasted with the Jewish. We have examined the testimony of the New Testament respecting *the example of the apostles* and of the churches enjoying their instructions; and we have found them uniformly administering baptism to believers in Christ only. Language is used which proves that all who were baptized, were capable of "putting on Christ," and of "answering a good conscience toward God." We have also examined the testimony of ecclesiastical history. We have found none but believers mentioned as subjects of baptism by the Christian writers for a hundred years subsequent to the apostolic age. We have discovered the first traces of infant baptism about the beginning of the third century, and have seen it gradually spread-

ing, until in the time of Augustine it became general. We have shown in what way its introduction may be readily and satisfactorily accounted for. And finally, we have adduced several distinct and decisive proofs from the history of the church, *against* its apostolic origin.

We ask, what more can be demanded? What stronger proof could, in the nature of the case, exist? Every source from which an argument bearing on the subject, can possibly be drawn, furnishes evidence leading invariably to the same result. There is no conflicting of testimony. There is no balancing of proof. There is scarcely an occasion for removing a difficulty. The evidence derived from whatever source, not only fails entirely of furnishing any thing in favor of the divine authority of infant baptism; but is in every instance *opposed* to it. It would seem sufficient for every practical purpose, to show that, as is admitted by the advocates of infant baptism themselves, there is not in the New Testament either direct precept or example to sanction it. We have shown, however, in addition to this, that the design of baptism, the nature of Christ's kingdom, the qualifications necessary for membership, the specified prerequisites for baptism, the example of the apostles, presented in the New Testament, and indicated by the subsequent history of the church, all these, actually *forbid* the practice of it. They not merely refuse to utter a syllable to indicate that it is required; they combine their separate and independent testimony to declare that it is *wrong*. It will be perceived, therefore, that those who practice infant baptism, act, not only without authority, but *in direct opposition to the most express authority*. They take upon themselves the responsibility

of sustaining a practice which the Head of the church has signified, on a variety of independent grounds, is *opposed to his will.* We ask the reader if he is willing to bear that responsibility? If he is willing, either by precept or example, by act or profession, directly or indirectly, to countenance a practice which is so clearly, not only unauthorized, but *prohibited,* by the word of God?

SECTION XIV.

THE EVILS OF INFANT BAPTISM.

It does not directly pertain to our present object to speak of the EVILS resulting from the practice of infant baptism. In consideration, however, of the position assumed in its defence, a few remarks upon this point may be desirable. Many of its advocates, especially the German authors, while they admit that it is destitute of scriptural authority, attempt to defend it on the ground that it is not without advantages. Such an argument, even were it founded in fact, ought to have no force with those who take the Bible as their only rule of religious faith and practice. In the positive institutions of religion, especially in its symbolical ordinances, nothing can be a reason for action, but the revealed will of God. Were it otherwise, the door would be open for the introduction of every practice which the zeal or superstition of men might deem advisable. Much less can any argument derived from the supposed effects of infant baptism, be of weight, against the accumulation of evidence adduced from the New Testament, showing that the practice is op-

posed to the will of Christ, and consequently forbidden. While, therefore, no consideration arising from such a source, could be a reason for practicing infant baptism, we may, however, should it appear that its tendency is evil, urge the fact as an additional reason for its *discontinuance*. It would be adding sin to sin, to countenance a practice which, in addition to being opposed to the teaching of the New Testament, is clearly pernicious in its influence.

Whatever temporal purposes may be served by infant baptism, we believe it will be found that its ultimate effects are invariably "evil and only evil continually." To some of its evil effects we briefly advert.

1. It tends to exert an unfavorable influence on the minds of those who have been the subjects of it, as they grow up into life. Upon arriving to years of understanding, they naturally inquire why they were baptized in infancy? what object was thereby accomplished? They are told, perhaps, that by this means they were "*regenerated*," "made members of Christ, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven." In other cases they are taught that the blessings of the covenant of grace were thereby *sealed* to them, and that they were recognized as members of the church of Christ. Now what is the legitimate effect of such instruction upon their minds? Does it lead them to feel the necessity of personal faith and regeneration? Does it impress upon them the solemn fact that their state before God is determined solely by their own acceptance or rejection of the gospel? The tendency, it is obvious, is directly the reverse. They will conclude, either that their baptism was a useless ceremony, or that their condition is in some way more favorable than

it otherwise would be, as it respects the salvation of their souls. Can they be easily persuaded that they have been "made members of Christ and children of God," and are yet "the children of wrath, even as others;"—that they have been "regenerated," and have become "inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," and are yet without any title to a participation in its eternal blessings? Or will they readily believe that an interest in the covenant of grace is of no avail in ensuring their salvation? that the blessings of that covenant have been "sealed" to them, and that yet they have no personal interest in the enjoyment of them? If the doctrine on which infant baptism is predicated is *believed*, the effect must be what is here indicated. If it is *not to be believed*, why is it taught? and why is the practice of which it is the foundation, continued?

In many cases, we know, the effect indicated, is actually produced. And although in communities where evangelical sentiments are predominant, this effect may to a great extent be prevented, still the *tendency* of the practice is invariably the same; and when left unrestrained it seldom fails to work out its legitimate and disastrous consequences. It is not necessary that we appeal, in proof of this, to the state of things existing in the national churches of Europe, both Romanist and Protestant; the mass of whose members can give no other reason for hoping that they shall be saved, than that they have received the seal of the covenant of grace, and have been made members of the kingdom of Christ, in infancy. It will suffice that we refer to certain Pedobaptist denominations in our own country who in doctrine are regarded as mainly evangelical, among whom it is common for those who were christened in infancy, upon arriving at a certain

age, to be admitted after some little catechetical instruction, to all the privileges of the church, as persons who have fully assumed the christian character. Such is the almost inevitable result, where the restraint derived from the prevalence of evangelical religion, is removed. Is it said, that churches adhering to the doctrine of believers' baptism, may decline in spirituality, and be guilty of admitting unconverted members? There is, however, in the two cases, this essential difference. Baptism, in the one case, occupies a position to *counteract* such a tendency; it presents a *barrier* to such admissions that must be *overcome*, and thus meets every attempt to commingle the church and the world, with its constant and pointed rebuke. In the other, it is itself *the door for admitting these evils*. It legitimately tends to this result, and directly perpetuates it when produced.

2. Infant baptism tends to hinder those of its subjects who become converted, from being themselves baptized, and from thus professing their conversion in the ordinance appointed for that purpose.

A large proportion of the members belonging to the Pedobaptist churches, live and die in utter disobedience of the command enjoined on every believer, to arise and be baptized in profession of his faith. In most cases, perhaps, the duty is scarcely realized. In others, although perceived and appreciated, it is left unperformed. Many a young convert, as he has seen his companions professing their faith in Christ in the ordinance of baptism, has felt that it was *hard* to be himself debarred from the privilege, simply because, as he is informed, he was dedicated to God in his infancy. Many of those baptized were, perhaps, in the prayers and vows of their parents, as really and as effectually

dedicated to God, as himself; but he, in consequence of his dedication, must through life be denied the privilege of putting on Christ by baptism. Can any practice be innocent, which, however unjustifiably, is actually the direct cause of such palpable and general disobedience to a requirement which in the New Testament is identified with a public profession of the gospel?

3. Baptism administered in infancy entirely precludes the salutary impression which the observance of the ordinance is designed to make on the mind of the subject. Let an individual in the exercise of faith and true devotion, go forward and publicly consecrate himself to the service of his Redeemer in the ordinance appointed for that purpose, and the impression made on his mind will be eminently salutary and abiding. He will frequently revert to the scene with pleasure and profit in future life. As often as he sees the ordinance administered, the feelings which he possessed at his own baptism, will be renewed and strengthened. But in the case of those baptized in infancy, all this benefit, these salutary impressions, these delightful recollections, are lost. This fact is forcibly expressed in a passage occurring in the devotional works of Archbishop Leighton. "Baptism being but once administered, and that in infancy, is very seldom and slightly considered by many, even real christians. And so we are at a loss in that profit and comfort, that increase in both holiness and faith, which the frequent recollecting of it after a spiritual manner, would no doubt advance in us." The only remedy of this evil is the abandonment of infant baptism, and the adoption of the scriptural practice of baptizing those only who give evidence that they are savingly interested in the gospel.

4. Infant baptism tends to annihilate the line of demarkation between the church and the world. The doctrine of pedobaptism is, either that infants are born members of the church and are to be baptized in recognition of that relationship, or that in baptism they are introduced into the church. Their connection, of course, continues the same as they advance in life; and consistency requires that they should be admitted to the privileges to which their membership properly entitles them. In most Pedobaptist churches this is done without hesitation. In the Greek church, infants are admitted to the Eucharist immediately on their baptism. In most of the churches of Europe and some in America, this is deferred until they have received an amount of catechetical instruction, and have undergone some process of confirmation. The ground on which they are admitted, is, however, in both cases essentially the same,—they are members of the church, and, consequently, ought not to be denied its privileges. The church is thus filled with worldly unconverted members, and the line of demarkation established by Christ is ultimately removed. And although in evangelical churches, as was observed with respect to a kindred evil, this influence may to a great extent be counteracted, its *tendency* is, nevertheless, in all cases the same; and it only requires a change of circumstances, as has been evinced in numerous instances both in Europe and America, for it actually to produce the same effects. We ask the reader to look at the state of most churches in Christendom where infant baptism prevails, and mark the process by which they have been brought into that state; and will it be denied that the legitimate influence of infant baptism is evil?

5. Another evil connected with infant baptism is the *countenance* it gives to other anti-scriptural practices. As it becomes necessary to rest its defence on other grounds than the express sanction of the word of God, the great Protestant principle that the Bible is the only rule of religious faith and practice, is practically set aside, and the door is opened for the introduction and defence of every religious observance which the fancy or superstition of men may deem expedient. The arguments which Protestants are accustomed to urge against the church of Rome are thus deprived of half their force. We verily believe that one of the greatest obstacles to success in the efforts made to arrest the progress, and counteract the influence of Romanism in this country, lies in the adherence to pedobaptism on the part of Protestant churches.

We leave these facts for the candid consideration of the reader. We have adduced them, partly to refute the position that infant baptism, if not sanctioned by scriptural authority, is, at least, a useful institution, and, partly, as additional reasons for the immediate discontinuance of a practice, which we had before proved by an overwhelming amount of evidence, to be unauthorized, and even forbidden, by the word of God. To admit to baptism, and introduce into the church, those who are, as the Master himself has expressly taught us, unfit subjects, is daring presumption. But to do it at the hazard of encouraging the unregenerate to believe that they are interested in the covenant of grace, of causing christians to neglect a prominent injunction of the New Testament, and to fail of securing the benefits connected with obedience, of annihilating the line of demarkation which Christ has established between his church and the world, and

of preparing the way for the more rapid spread of anti-scriptural and superstitious views and practices, is a fearful aggravation of the offence. Did evangelical Pedobaptists generally view this subject in its true light, they would, we are satisfied, shrink from the responsibility of countenancing a custom which in addition to being opposed to the teaching of Christ and his apostles, is attended with so many serious and far reaching evils.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AUTHORITY OF BAPTISM,

OR

THE DUTY OF BELIEVERS IN CHRIST TO BE BAPTIZED ON PROFESSION OF THEIR FAITH.

THE design of baptism indicates that it is the DUTY of all who believe in Christ to be baptized on profession of their faith. Is a public profession of discipleship required of all who would follow Christ? and is baptism, as we have shown, the means which he has appointed for making this profession? The former requisition, of course, implies the latter. Was baptism instituted as a visible line of demarkation between the people of God and the world? and is it the duty of the former to come out from the world and be separate? Their duty to be baptized is necessarily involved. Are they under obligation to identify themselves with the church of Christ? This can properly be done only by observing the appointed rite of initiation. Is baptism a symbolical ordinance? It is certainly befitting that it be observed by all who have experienced the thing signified. Such was obviously the intention of its Divine Author in its institution.

The appeals which are made in the New Testament to the design and significancy of baptism clearly indicate that the ordinance is one of which every christian should be the subject. He should appear before the world as one who is "dead with Christ," having been

in baptism "buried with him;" as one who has entered upon a new life, having been emblematically raised up in the likeness of his resurrection." Christ has designated his people "the light of the world:" and he designs that the great truths by which the world is especially to be benefited, shall appear conspicuous in their very profession, in the character which they assume, and by which they are known, as his disciples. Hence their obligation to identify with their character the significancy of the appointed ordinance of christian profession, in which these truths are emblematically exhibited.

The duty of christians to be baptized in profession of their faith, is further evident from *the express injunctions of Christ and his apostles.* His final commission to his disciples was, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even *unto the end of the world.*" Mat. 28: 19, 20. This language implies that to the end of time it will be obligatory on those who become disciples, to submit to baptism. Otherwise, the commission cannot be fulfilled. It is accordingly added, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark 16: 16; the duty of baptism being thus represented as co-extensive with the exercise of faith. Hence we find Peter enjoining on the multitudes at Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized *every one of you* in the name of Jesus Christ." As it was the duty of all to repent, so upon their repentance it would be incumbent on them, "every one," to be baptized. The same thing is taken for granted in the address of Ananias to Saul, "And now, why tarriest thou?

Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

We arrive at the same conclusion by considering the *examples* of baptism recorded in the New Testament. The apostles appear to have uniformly acted on the principle that it was the duty of those who believed to be baptized. Those who at Pentecost "gladly received the word," did not consider it optional with them whether they should observe or neglect the ordinance. They had been taught to regard it as a duty; and they submitted to it as such without hesitation. The Samaritans, "when they believed,—were baptized both men and women." The Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized." See also Acts 8: 35–39; 10: 48; 16: 14, 15, 30–34; 19: 1–5. We believe no one can attentively read the Acts of the Apostles, without receiving the settled conviction that the primitive teachers of Christianity, considered the ordinance of baptism obligatory on all who embraced the gospel. The repeated allusions to baptism in the Epistles, likewise, clearly imply that the members of the apostolic churches had, in being baptized, complied with a gospel *requirement.* 1 Cor. 1: 13–16; Gal. 3: 27; Eph. 4: 5; Col. 2: 12; etc.

In the light of these facts we see the propriety of the description of baptism given by the apostle Peter, as "*the answer of a good conscience toward God;*"—an express implication that obedience to the dictates of a conscience purified by faith, and enlightened by the word of God, will lead to the observance of the ordinance. Let such a conscience exert its proper authority among all the disciples of Christ, and they would be impelled with one accord to "arise and be baptized." It becomes, then, an important inquiry, Why

are they so generally found neglecting the duty? To a consideration of some of the reasons assigned for this neglect, we now invite the reader's candid attention.

1. It is frequently urged that *baptism is not essential to salvation*, and that if the thing signified is secured, all else is of little account. Our first remark respecting this excuse will relate to its extreme *selfishness*. The individual supposed hopes that his sins have been forgiven, that his heart has been renewed, that he has obtained a title to heaven; and he is required to profess the change which he has experienced, and his obligation to its gracious Author, by being baptized. But he replies, "This surely is not necessary. I am in possession, I trust, of the 'one thing needful.' I have a comfortable evidence that my name is written in heaven. And why should I be further concerned about the requisitions of the gospel?" Such surely are not the dictates of piety. Indulgence in such a spirit would soon lead to a neglect of all the external duties of religion.

The fact that baptism is not in itself essential to salvation, does not set aside the necessity of a disposition to obey Christ. A "good conscience," or a conscientious regard for the will of God, such as was anciently "answered" in baptism, cannot be too scrupulously preserved. Hazardous, indeed, is the indulgence of an impression that the spirit of obedience implied in the declaration, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," and the wilful neglect of a plain scriptural command, will affect alike our spiritual interests.

2. Another excuse for refusing to profess faith in Christ in the ordinance which he has appointed for that purpose, is, that *the requisite profession has been made by the observance of another rite of somewhat sim-*

ilar import. This excuse, if not presented in the precise form in which it is here stated, is, nevertheless, in fact, the ground on which multitudes in Pedobaptist churches, attempt to justify their neglect of baptism. That they have been immersed in the name of the Trinity, in accordance with the simple meaning of the word baptize, and the invariable practice of the primitive Christians, they do not pretend. That they have symbolically declared their spiritual conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ by being "buried with him in baptism," they do not claim. That they have signified the washing away of their sins by being bathed in the cleansing element, they cannot affirm. But they have observed a rite which bears a resemblance to certain ceremonies, which under the Mosaic law were significant of purification. In the use of this they have professed faith in Christ; and they endeavor to persuade themselves that this will suffice. Show them that this is not submission to the ordinance appointed by Christ; and they reply, that it will, at least, answer the same purpose.

This excuse involves the principle that those to whom the positive institutions of the gospel are given, are at liberty to change them at pleasure, or to set them aside in favor of the inventions of men. The recklessness and inconsistency of such a position have been fully illustrated in the preceding sections. It provides that any ceremony whatever, in case it be in some way significant of the facts represented by a gospel ordinance, may be substituted in its place.

Let us,—applying to the present case the illustration introduced in a former section,—let us suppose that the members of a church assemble professedly to celebrate the Lord's Supper. The bread and wine are exhibited

to their view. The one is broken, and distributed among them; and they are invited to look through the emblem to the sacrifice of Christ, as the ground of their salvation. The other is poured forth, as a symbol of that on which they depend for the remission of their sins. They call this "the breaking of bread," "the communion," "the Lord's Supper;" and claim to have answered the design of the ordinance, so called, appointed by Christ. Can any one persuade himself that the injunctions, "Take *eat*,"—"*Drink* ye all of it," would be obeyed in such a transaction? The case is similar with respect to baptism;—with this important difference, however, that the ordinance instead of being simply abridged, is entirely set aside, and another rite observed in its stead. The injunction is, as the word employed properly and incontrovertibly signifies, *Be immersed.* As in the Lord's Supper, a definite act is enjoined, and nothing but the performance of that act, is obedience. Nor is it to be forgotten, that the significancy of the ordinance is, in the one case, no less than in the other, inseparable from the act required.

3. Another excuse urged by multitudes for neglecting to obey the requirement to be baptized, is the fact that *the rite, or one called by the same name, has been observed by others in their behalf.* In infancy they were the passive subjects of a ceremony of religious dedication. The transaction, as far as it was, not merely a moral, or voluntary, or conscious act, but an act at all, was not their own, but that of their parents or sponsors. This act, for which others alone were responsible, of which others alone were the agents, they consider a sufficient reason for neglecting themselves to obey the command which Christ has enjoined on all his followers,

and in obeying which they are to make a profession of their discipleship. A simple statement of the case, is sufficient to expose the utter weakness and folly of the excuse.

Even were it conceded that it is the privilege of parents to observe baptism in behalf of their children, the obligation of the latter to be baptized upon embracing the gospel, would not be in the least diminished. The command is addressed to them as individual and responsible agents: and if they are conscious that they have never obeyed it, it is folly to imagine that any act of their parents will excuse their disobedience.

We are aware that an attempt is made to defend the principle involved in the practice of infant baptism, by appealing to the regulations respecting circumcision. It is to be observed, however, that the command requiring the observance of this rite on the eighth day, was given, not to the children, but to the parents. It was *their* duty to see that it was properly performed. Gen. 17: 10–14; Lev. 12: 3; John 7: 22, 23. There was a sufficient reason for this in the nature of the Jewish economy. In a dispensation which had respect *to a nation as such*, it was important that the members of that nation should, even from their earliest infancy, be kept distinct from the rest of mankind. The performance of circumcision the appointed badge of nationality, was like placing the name of the child on the public records. But in the kingdom of Christ where a title to membership is evinced, not by natural descent, but solely by a change of character, a disposition to walk in newness of life, not only is there a manifest impropriety in applying the rite of recognition to infants, in whom the evidence of possessing these qualifications is entirely wanting, but it is appropriate that this change, this voluntary entrance upon a new life,

should be signified by those by whom it is experienced. Baptism partakes of the nature of an oath of allegiance, and, as in civil law, is required of those to whom it is intended to apply. It is, as we have fully shown, uniformly represented in the New Testament as the individual duty of those who become the subjects of it. It cannot, of course, in the nature of the case, be performed by others in their stead.

We can no more be released from our obligation to obedience in respect to baptism, in consequence of what others may have done for us, than in respect to any other religious duty. With the word of God before us, we feel that it is our duty to pray, however numerous may have been the prayers offered in our behalf; that it is incumbent on us to consecrate ourselves to God, although we may have been the subjects of a dedication by our parents; that we are under obligation to renounce the world and the sinful lusts of the flesh, notwithstanding this renunciation may have been made by others in our stead and name. All this, we feel, does not, cannot affect *our* duty in these respects. And why should it be otherwise in respect to baptism?

But the fallacy of the excuse under consideration, will appear in a still more convincing light, if it be remembered that baptism is the appointed means of making a public profession of the gospel. That a command addressed to those who believe in Christ, to be baptized in his name or as his disciples, should be obeyed by acts performed without their concurrence, or even knowledge, is in itself sufficiently incredible. But it is, if possible, still more incredible that any such act should be obedience, while the very design of the ordinance entirely fails of being thereby fulfilled. If

baptism is what it is, even in Pedobaptist confessions of faith, admitted to be, a sign to the party baptized, of "his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life;" it is obvious the evidence of this change must appear, before the rite can be properly observed. Its validity depends on its being performed for the purpose for which it was instituted. There must be on the part of the subject a profession that he has repented of his sins, and embraced the gospel, or there is no obedience.

An example strikingly illustrative of this position is furnished in the case of the twelve men mentioned Acts 19: 1-7. They had been baptized unto what was called "John's baptism." This had been done, as is evident from several circumstances, subsequently to the descent of the Holy Spirit at the season of Pentecost;* and probably while Apollos was at Ephesus. Comp. chap. 18: 24, 25; 19: 1. They had not, therefore, been baptized into the faith of *Jesus* as the Messiah, either as yet to come, or as having already appeared. And hence upon being instructed in the truth respecting his character and claims, and embracing it, they were baptized *in his name.* They had no scruples about being rebaptized. Their former baptism had not fulfilled the design of the ordinance appointed by Christ, and they considered it null. They had made no profession of faith in Him on whom John taught "the people, that they should believe;" and hence by the direction of the apostle they were rebaptized.

With how much greater force do the same reasons for baptism in the name of Christ, apply in the case of those who may have been baptized in infancy. They were ignorant, not merely of the import of the trans-

* Note J. Appendix.

action, but of its performance. They not only did not profess faith in the true Messiah; they made no profession whatever. They were not only not baptized as the disciples of the Lord Jesus; they were incapable of becoming disciples. If then the twelve men at Ephesus were, for the reasons suggested, rebaptized, the subjects of infant baptism ought not, surely, to hesitate to follow their example. This we say on the assumption that, like the former, they have once submitted to baptism. Such, however, as we have shown, is not the fact. Their baptism, as far as personal accountability or agency is involved, would be in no sense *re*baptism. In some Pedobaptist denominations at the baptism of infants, a renunciation of the world and of the sinful desires of the flesh, is publicly professed in their behalf, and in their name, by those who stand as their sponsors. This, however, does not expose them to the liability of making a formal profession of religion the second time. They ordinarily, upon arriving to years of discretion, have no fears on this point. They *know* that they have never made any such profession. For the same reason they know that they have never performed any act that can be called baptism; and hence it is not possible that as responsible agents they should be rebaptized. The command to be baptized in the name of Christ, cannot, in the nature of the case, be obeyed by a transaction in which there is, not merely no profession, but no responsibility, no agency, no knowledge, on the part of the subject. And yet on the ground that such a transaction will suffice, multitudes in Christian lands who give evidence of piety, attempt to justify themselves in neglecting to obey that command, and even in encouraging the same neglect on the part of others. We

believe, however, the time is approaching when such an excuse will cease to be urged; when the acts of others will no longer be plead in justification of personal disobedience; when the spontaneous inquiry of the converted will individually be, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" and they will esteem it alike a duty and a privilege to be immersed in imitation of the example of their Lord, and in the likeness of his death and resurrection, and thus to take upon themselves the appropriate, the appointed badge of discipleship.

CHAPTER V.

THE RELATIVE POSITION OF BAPTISM,

OR

THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS OF ADMISSION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

WE proceed to inquire, What is THE RELATIVE POSITION OF BAPTISM, particularly with reference to THE LORD'S SUPPER? That the former is properly a prerequisite to the latter, is obvious from their design.

Baptism being the instituted means of professing an interest in the gospel, is naturally the *first* definite public act required of those who become christians. And while living in the neglect of this, on what ground can they *consistently* seek admission to the Lord's supper? Are they, in wishing to observe the latter ordinance, influenced by a spirit of obedience to Christ? Why should not the same spirit lead them to the performance of the previous duty, equally plain, equally imperative, equally important? An unwillingness to obey Christ in one of his requirements, and especially one occupying the place of baptism, is certainly not the most suitable spirit for engaging in the discharge of some subsequent duty; and least of all, for celebrating an ordinance in which the observants are supposed expressly to signify their indebtedness to him for salvation, and their consequent obligation to yield him their unreserved obedience. The inconsistency of desiring a seat at the communion table, while the ordinance of baptism is overlooked or disregarded, would

seem to be too obvious, not to be generally felt and acknowledged.

These suggestions naturally lead to the inquiry, To whom shall the invitation to unite in celebrating the Lord's supper be extended? It will doubtless be generally conceded that the nature and design of the ordinance are such, that one thing demanded of those who are invited, should be that they have made some profession of Christianity. What then shall churches in applying this general principle, acknowledge as a suitable or sufficient profession? Shall they take the ground that the manner of professing an interest in the gospel is immaterial; that any mode of profession, public or private, formal or informal, ritual or verbal, orthodox or heretical, will suffice? Or shall they adopt certain restrictions or requisitions of their own devising, suggested by a reference to their own feelings or convenience? Or shall they, as the only alternative, *in their acts as churches*, require the profession appointed in the New Testament, and uniformly observed by the primitive christians as the answer of a good conscience toward God? Their duty in this case must, we think, be too obvious to be easily mistaken.

But it was the design of Christ that the profession made in baptism should be conjoined with the act of becoming identified with the interests of his church. It is on this condition alone that the ordinance can fully answer the end for which it was instituted, as a visible line of demarkation between the people of God and the world. Hence baptism may be regarded a prerequisite to the Lord's supper, especially, as being *the appointed rite of initiation into the visible church*; or that which, although it does not in itself constitute any one a church member, is the only door by which the

church can properly receive individuals to membership. The Lord's supper, as is apparent from the whole tenor of the apostolic teachings, especially from 1 Cor. 11: 20–34; 10: 16, 17, is strictly a *church ordinance.* In primitive times those who were baptized, were "added to the church." They thus became subject to all the regulations of the church, and entitled to all its privileges, among which the observance of the Lord's supper was prominent. Acts 2: 41, 42, 47: 1 Cor. 1: 13; 11: 20–34. *While baptism, therefore, is a prerequisite to church membership, church membership is a prerequisite to the Lord's supper.* We have no warrant from the New Testament for receiving to the Lord's table any who have not been baptized, and admitted to membership in the church.

Such being the principle of action with reference to the observance of the Lord's supper, established by the apostles, and recognized in the New Testament, we find that it was tenaciously adhered to by the Christians in succeeding ages. As, on the one hand, none were baptized but such as became members of the church, so, on the other, none were received to membership in the church, or admitted to its peculiar privileges, without being baptized. Justin Martyr, speaking of the Supper, says, "This food is called by us the Eucharist; of which it is not lawful for any to partake, but such as believe the things taught by us to be true, and have been baptized." "It is certain," says Dr. Doddridge, "that Christians in general, have always been spoken of, by the most ancient Fathers, as baptized persons. And it is also certain that, as far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity extends, no unbaptized person received the Lord's Supper."

Dr. Dick in his Lectures on Theology, p. 494, says,

that baptism, "the initiating ordinance of the Christian dispensation," is "requisite to entitle a person to a seat at the table of the Lord;" and adds, "I do not know that this was ever called in question till lately, that a controversy has arisen among the English Baptists, whether persons of other Christian denominations may not be occasionally admitted to the holy communion with them; and it became necessary for those who adopted the affirmative, to maintain that baptism is not a previous condition. This assertion arose out of their peculiar system, which denies the validity of infant baptism;"—a direct admission that the practice of the regular Baptist churches in their observance of the Lord's Supper, is conformed to primitive usage; and that their "peculiarity," or the point in which they differ from other denominations, consists in their views of baptism, *not of the communion.* And until they abandon their present position, and actually introduce the practice of mixed communion, they will never be justly liable to the charge brought by Dr. Dick against some of the English Baptists, of departing or deviating from what even Pedobaptist churches maintain to be the only consistent and scriptural principle of action.

The principle of extending the invitation to unite in the observance of the Lord's supper to such only as have been baptized on a credible profession of faith, and become connected with the church, is evidently, aside from the fact that it is established by the New Testament, the only *rational* and *consistent* principle. An effective motive with those who embrace the gospel for seeking membership in the church, and thus assuming its responsibilities, is the hope of enjoying its privileges, among which is a participation in the Lord's supper. Now were the principles of mixed commun-

ion to be generally adopted, this motive would in a great measure be removed. Many who might esteem it a privilege to commune with the church, would not, even should they be baptized, choose, for a variety of reasons, to place themselves under its watchcare and discipline, or enter into a formal engagement to sustain its interests. Their influence in the cause of Christ would thus be mostly lost; and the church would so far fail of accomplishing the object for which it was established.

Mixed communion, moreover, teaches practically that baptism and church membership are of little importance, and may be disregarded with impunity. If those who have never been received into the fellowship of the church, nor even baptized, are to be placed on the same ground with church members, the inference drawn by most minds will be, that there is no necessity for assuming the badge of membership at all; that an act which does not affect the rights or privileges of christians, nor practically their relationship, is more a matter of choice and convenience, than of obligation, and hence may be observed or neglected at pleasure.

In mixed communion, moreover, it is found necessary to adopt certain rules, which, while they are really restrictive, are alike arbitrary and unscriptural. While in theory the general principle is assumed that all christians should be admitted to the Lord's table, *it is almost universally abandoned in practice.* The churches professedly acting upon this principle are obliged in attempting to apply it, to institute certain regulations as really restrictive as the terms of communion presented in the New Testament; while they have the disadvantage of being avowedly without scriptural authority. They are accommodated merely to the wishes

or convenience of those adopting them, and are consequently for the most part entirely arbitrary. On what principle of obligation, for example, does a church extend the invitation of communion to those who are connected with some church usually denominated evangelical, whether consisting of baptized or of unbaptized members, of professed christians, or in fact of such as are merely seeking an interest in Christianity; while all, however pious, who do not come under this designation, are, if not rejected, at least not invited? On what ground is this, and similar distinctions made among those who it is admitted are real christians? Why is not the invitation extended to christians who may be connected with churches not termed evangelical? and even to those who, from whatever cause, have never made any public profession of religion whatever? In fine, why is not the door opened indiscriminately to all who either in their own estimation, or in that of others, have been converted, whatever be their character or conduct or relations in other respects? We presume there is not an evangelical church practicing mixed communion, in Christendom, who act upon this unrestricted principle. And why, we ask, is it not applied? Why are certain restrictions, which are discarded in theory, invariably adopted in practice? Evidently because the theory is false, and consequently impracticable.

It thus becomes apparent that the adherents of mixed communion occupy a position of singular inconsistency. Under pretence that all christians should indiscriminately be admitted to the Lord's table, they reject the terms of admission established by Christ and his apostles; and then, finding it impossible to apply the principle in practice, they assume without au-

thority, or any claim to authority, the prerogative of instituting certain restrictions of their own devising. The inconsistencies and difficulties in which their theory inevitably involves them, are a sufficient indication of its utter fallacy.

The only rational and consistent course is the one marked out in the New Testament. The scriptural terms of communion are alike simple and easy of application. As the Lord's supper is a church ordinance, and none can properly be invited to unite in celebrating it, but such as have been received into the fellowship of the church, it follows that whatever is a bar to church membership, is a bar to church communion. If it be the duty of a church to withdraw from every brother who walketh disorderly,—from such, for example, as are attached to a system of error which sets aside the ordinances, or fundamental doctrines of the gospel,—if it would be improper to receive such to membership in the church, there is obviously, for the same reason, an impropriety in inviting them to the Lord's table. To deny the correctness of this position, is to reject the first principles of gospel order, and to strike at the very root of all visible church organization. If a visible church exist, there must of necessity be some distinction between those who are, and those who are not its members; and in nothing does this distinction more appropriately appear than in the observance of its special ordinances.

In the light of these suggestions, it is scarcely necessary to remark that the rejection of mixed communion is no barrier to the exercise of christian charity. It indicates simply a conscientious regard for the will of Christ, and a disposition to preserve the order of his church. If the fact that all christians are not indiscriminately invited

to the Lord's table, imply a deficiency of the true christian spirit, it is a charge which lies equally against every evangelical denomination in Christendom. It is a fact deserving special attention, that the objections urged on this ground by Pedobaptist denominations against the usage of Baptist churches, are,—as the reader's own observation will doubtless furnish abundant proof,—of equal weight against their own practice. A single example will sufficiently illustrate our meaning.

In the spring of 1841, during an interesting revival of religion with the Congregational church in the village of R., near Hartford, Conn., occurred the regular communion season of the church. The converts in number from fifty to sixty were invited to repair to the gallery, and with devout feelings to "look on" and witness the celebration of the ordinance. Now we ask, Why was this? Why were they not admitted at once to the communion table? Had this inquiry been proposed to the pastor of the church, he would doubtless have replied, 'It is not that we have not fellowship for them as christians. It is not that we wish to make unnecessary distinctions among those who love Christ. It is not that we cannot commune with them in heaven. It is simply because their relationship to the church is not in our estimation such as will, upon principles of gospel order, entitle them to the privilege.' The reason we admit to be sufficient. We only ask that it be acknowledged to be of equal weight when urged in vindication of the practice of Baptist churches. If it be valid in the one case, it certainly is no less so in the other. And this single fact properly appreciated is sufficient to effectually silence the objections commonly urged against the usage of Baptist churches in

their observance of the Lord's supper. We repeat it, these objections are equally applicable alike to the principles and the practice of other Christian denominations.

But even were it otherwise, a desire to remove a groundless objection could never be a sufficient reason for disregarding the scriptural terms of communion, and inviting to the table of the Lord those who have never been received into the fellowship of the church. The members of a Christian church, while cherishing an unfeigned love for all who evince an attachment to Christ, are at the same time, sacredly bound to keep the ordinances as they were originally delivered.

Before closing our remarks respecting the design and position of baptism, we call attention very briefly to the bearing of the subject upon the decision of the question, What is *the proper form of government* for the churches of Christ? What form might we expect he would establish among them, the character and privileges and responsibility of the members being such as are indicated by their baptism? Not surely one which should involve an arbitrary distinction in their rights and privileges; which should prevent them from acting authoritatively and decisively as members of the body, in preserving its discipline and purity, or in selecting and applying appropriate means for its prosperity; which should place the responsibility and the right of

deciding who may be admitted or retained as its members, of appointing its officers, in fine, of controlling its affairs in general, in the hands of a single individual, or even of a few in distinction from the many. Such a government would be repugnant to the character and spirit of Christ's kingdom, and the object to be accomplished by a church organization among its members. That it is at variance with the model of a church given us in the New Testament, will be sufficiently obvious by reference to the following passages :—1 Cor. 5: 2–13; 6: 1–5; 16: 3; 2 Cor. 2: 6; 8: 19; Acts 6: 3–5; Mat. 18: 17. The primitive churches were strictly independent bodies, possessing and exercising the power of self government ;—" they elected," says Dr. Mosheim, " their own rulers and teachers ;" "they excluded profligate and lapsed brethren, and restored them ;" " in a word, they did every thing that is proper for those in whom the supreme power of the community is vested."

A company of baptized believers thus organized on terms which are adapted to bring into requisition the wisdom and energies of the whole body, exemplify the scriptural idea of a Christian church ; and under the influence of an enlightened and consistent piety they possess all the elements of true and permanent prosperity.

APPENDIX.

A.

1 Pet. 3: 21 is an interesting exposition of the manner in which baptism is connected with salvation. Instead of teaching that it possesses any *intrinsic efficacy* to save, it was evidently intended to guard against such an impression. The object for which it was instituted is altogether different from that of the Jewish ablutions. It affects our spiritual interests only as being "the answer of a good conscience toward God." It saves in the same general sense that every other act of obedience saves; although from the position which it occupies, it has a prominence which most other duties have not.

The apostle in the preceding context is speaking of the sufferings to which christians were subjected by their profession of the gospel. The mass of mankind were their enemies and persecutors. In this, however, there was no cause for discouragement on their part. They rather had reason, while enjoying the protection and favor of God, to consider themselves "happy," ver. 14. Noah and his family once stood alone in the world. But by obeying God they were "saved," while the rest of the human race, "being disobedient," were destroyed. The case was similar with the disciples of Christ. By being baptized in his name, and thus identifying themselves with the company of his followers, they had, while subjecting themselves to the reproach and persecution of the world, "answered a good conscience toward God;" they had obeyed their convictions of duty; they had publicly renounced the world and its pleasures, and had signified their preference for Christ and his cause; and it was in the exercise of the spirit that had prompted this course of action, that they hoped to be "saved."

Christ had said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."—"Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."—"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Mark 8: 34, 35, 38; Mat. 10: 32, 33.

These declarations of Christ were intimately associated in the minds of the primitive Christians with submission to baptism. A willingness to be baptized was in their circumstances, for the most part, an evidence of sincere attachment to Christ, and therefore a "token of salvation;" while an *unwillingness* to assume the badge of discipleship, was equivalent to being "*ashamed* of him before men," and hence a "token of perdition." Christ is "the author of eternal salvation to

all them that *obey him*;" and acceptable obedience always supposes or implies the existence of the corresponding *spirit*. In this light is evidently to be understood the declaration,—"He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." A settled unwillingness to be baptized, where the duty is clearly perceived, is in its nature inconsistent with the exercise of true and living faith. The ordinance of baptism, and the duties and reponsibilities which its proper observance involves, have presented to the mind of many an awakened sinner, an effectual barrier to his entering the kingdom of heaven. Others,—perhaps after a severe and protracted struggle with their convictions,—have, upon being brought to a full and hearty consent or willingness to take upon themselves the appointed badge of discipleship, obtained in the exercise of this feeling, evidence of forgiveness. Such cases are sufficient to illustrate the connexion of salvation with baptism as the answer of a good conscience toward God. And were the ordinance at the present day, generally viewed in the same light as it was in primitive times, a willingness to be baptized, and the evidence of faith, would doubtless in most cases, be inseparable.

B.

Acts 2: 38 evidently imports that repentance and baptism alike have reference to, or more specifically, *a direction toward* "the remission of sins;" but not necessarily in the same sense. The remission of sins is the reason or the occasion that both are required; but in what particular aspects it is so with respect to each, must be determined by reference to the distinctive nature and province of each. Thus in Rom. 6: 10, 11, Christ and the believer are represented as alike dying *unto sin*; i. e., sin was *the occasion* of death on the part of both;—it was *on account of* sin that both died; but it will not surely be contended that both died to sin in the same sense.

According to the representation of Acts 2: 38, repentance may be considered the condition on which remission is actually conferred; baptism, the means by which it is manifested and professed. Baptism attaches in a manner to the public character what had by repentance become identified with the private experience. The penitent is forgiven in the sight of God; the baptized person is forgiven in the estimation of his fellows; he stands before the world in a new character, as one divested of that which formerly excluded him from the divine favor. (Compare the note on page 27.)

In the light of these suggestions we see the reason that baptism is presented as a condition of "receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit." The miraculous effusion of the Spirit was designed as a public proof of the divine origin of Christianity, and of the divine presence in the Christian church. To serve this purpose most effectually it was necessary that it should ordinarily be restricted to such as by being baptized had acknowledged themselves Christians, and who, of course, were so regarded by the world. In being baptized they professed that as Christians their sins were forgiven, i. e., that they were reconciled to God, were in friendship with him, were the objects of his favor. And the descent of the Spirit was a divine attestation of the truth of this profession. It was proof to the world that the privileges and effects which in baptism were ascribed to Christianity, were real; that as Christ had sent forth his disciples to "preach repentance and re-

mission of sins in his name among all nations," it was indeed by believing in his name that "the remission of sins" was to be obtained. Hence the declaration, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

C.

The meaning of the phrase, "*the baptism of the Holy Spirit*," is evidently to be determined by the same process that we ascertain the import of other figures used in the Scriptures with reference to the impartation and enjoyment of the Spirit's influences. In determining the force of the figure employed Acts 2: 4, for example, we do not compare it with other figures, as that of drinking, or of anointing, or of pouring, see 1 Cor. 12: 13; 1 John 2: 20, 27; Isa. 44: 3, and gratuitously infer that they are synonymous, simply because they relate to the same general facts. But we inquire, What does the term used *literally signify?* and translating the passage, "And they were all *filled* with the Holy Spirit," we at once perceive that the figure employed is that of *filling*.

By a process precisely similar we may arrive at a knowledge of the import of the figure employed Acts 1: 5. We naturally inquire, not how many passages represent the impartation or reception of the Spirit, as a filling, or an anointing, or a drinking, or a shedding, or an outpouring:—such an examination is as inappropriate and as useless here, as in the case just presented. But we inquire, What is the literal meaning of the word baptize; and ascertaining that it properly signifies *to immerse*, we translate the passage, "Ye shall be *immersed* in the Holy Spirit." This is decisive in showing that the figure employed is that of an *immersion;* especially as the construction is such as to correspond only with the idea of immersion. "The word *Βαπτιζειν* (baptizein)" says Dr. Campbell, "is always construed suitably to this meaning (immersion); thus it is, *ἐν ὕδατι*, (*in water*), *ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ*, (*in the Jordan*); and we may add *ἐν Πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*, (*in the Holy Spirit*). Were the expression, however, '*with* the Holy Spirit,' it would not conflict with the idea of immersion. It would simply indicate that the Spirit is, in distinction from other things, brought into requisition in effecting the immersion.

The only objection, we believe, that is urged directly against the conclusion at which we have thus arrived, is that arising from the assumption that the figure of an immersion in relation to the influences of the Holy Spirit, is *unnatural*. This objection, however, were it founded in fact, would by no means be a sufficient reason for rejecting the figure, and substituting one which the simple import of the language employed will not warrant. Nor should we forget that what may seem to us unnatural, may possibly not be so in reality. The sacred writers may have had reasons for the use of certain figures and phrases, which do not occur to our minds; or which from our peculiar habits of thought and expression, we may not be in a condition fully to appreciate.

But, independently of these suggestions, there is not in the nature of the case, the slightest ground for the objection. It arises, we imagine, chiefly from a failure to apprehend or appreciate the exact nature and force of the figure employed. The precise representation we

regard to be this,—The Holy Spirit is conceived of as coming upon the subject in such measure that he is immersed, overwhelmed, encompassed. The word baptize in this case expresses the simple fact of an immersion. The manner in which it is effected is supplied by the mind, and corresponds, of course, with its ordinary conceptions respecting the nature and operation of the Spirit's influences.*

Thus understood the figure is not merely not unnatural; it is peculiarly expressive and forcible. It is exactly adapted to the purpose for which it was obviously introduced, viz., to express the *abundance* or *copiousness* with which the Spirit should be bestowed on the disciples subsequently to the ascension of Christ. They had already been made *partakers* of the Spirit. His influence had been enjoyed in the renovation of their hearts. But they had the promise that in time to come, they should be *baptized* with it. This promise was fulfilled, as appears from Acts 1: 5; 2: 1–4; 11: 15, 16, at the season of Pentecost, when "there came suddenly a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind; and it filled all the house where they were sitting." "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." An extraordinary and invisible influence, like a mighty wind, seemed to rush in upon them, and pervade the entire atmosphere; so that they became as if completely immersed in it. The Spirit resting upon them, appeared to encircle them with his influence.

The figure of an immersion in the passages Acts 1: 5; Mat. 3: 11; etc., was evidently suggested by the use of immersion in water as the initiatory rite of the gospel. And it is this fact in part that gives it its peculiar interest and force. John immersed the people in water: this, in one view, affected simply the body; it was, at most, merely a profession of an interest in spiritual things. But an immersion in the influences of the Holy Spirit shed upon them, would extend in its effects to the soul; it would not be a mere symbol; but, involving a real efficacious agency, it would be an actual realization of the blessings of the kingdom of God.

* The use of βαπτίζω, as thus stated, corresponds, it will be perceived, precisely with that of the English term, *to immerse*. Had the command instituting the rite of baptism, been given in the English language, in the use of the word "immerse," it would have been universally understood as enjoining the specific act of *putting beneath the surface* of the water. And yet with a slight variation, not so much in the meaning of the term, as in the application that is made of it, we speak familiarly, and with perfect propriety, of an object that is inundated or covered with a fluid, as being *immersed*. The usage with respect to the Greek term βαπτίζω appears to have been in these particulars precisely similar. Even President Beecher admits that an object may be properly *baptized*, in accordance to what he represents as "the original and primitive meaning of the word," that is, it may be brought into a state where it is "*enveloped* or *surrounded* by a fluid," by the process of "*pouring* the fluid *copiously over*" it, as well as by other methods. No one surely adopting this position, will contend that there is any thing either unnatural or inappropriate in the use of the figure of a baptism,—i. e., a being "surrounded," "enveloped," *immersed*,—to express *the result* of the *copious outpouring* of the Holy Spirit at the time of Pentecost.

The position assumed,—inconsiderately, we are constrained to believe,—by Mr. Beecher and others, that the figure of an immersion in relation to spiritual influences and exercises, does not accord with the ordinary conceptions of the human mind, finds a sufficient refutation in the familiar use of expressions like the following;—"*absorbed* in communion with God;"—"*sinking* into his will;"—"*swallowed up* in his love;"—"*overwhelmed* with a sense of divine things." Examples more exactly in point, however, are found in a class of expressions much in use among certain denominations of Christians, in whose views of religious experience the baptism of the Spirit, holds a conspicuous place. How often in listening to their petitions do we hear language like this,—"Let thy Holy Spirit descend upon us in *copious* effusions; shed it upon us *abundantly;* yea, *baptize* us with his sacred influences."—"Let thy sensible presence *fill all the place, pervade the entire assembly;* may we feel it within us and *around* us; may the very *atmosphere* be that of heaven."—"Let thy salvation *roll in upon us like a flood;* let it come like a mighty *torrent;* may *wave after wave roll over us; deluge* the entire assembly with thy glory; may we be *inundated* with the influences of thy Holy Spirit." These expressions, whatever may be thought of them in other respects, are decisive in showing how naturally the mind in expressing a desire for a *large measure* of divine influence, resorts to the figure of an immersion or overwhelming.

But it may be interesting to inquire, in what light the baptism of the Spirit was understood by the ancient Fathers of the Christian church. They variously represent its *object* as being to enlighten, to purify, to furnish with spiritual gifts, &c. But the baptism itself they describe as an immersion or overwhelming in the influences of the Spirit. This appears in the very construction which they adopt. In contrast with being baptized *in water*, or *in the waters*, (see notes, p. 59), they customarily speak of being baptized *in the Holy Spirit*. Origen, for example, speaking of Christians, and alluding to 1 Cor. 10: 1, 2, says, "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, that all our fathers have passed through Jordan, and have all been baptized into Jesus, *in the Spirit and in the river*." Any translation of this passage which should not express immersion, or the idea of being baptized *in* the Spirit, would carry with it its own refutation.*

But passages are not infrequent in the writings of the Fathers in which they directly explain the baptism of the Spirit as being an immersion in the Spirit.

Cyril of Jerusalem, speaking of the descent of the Spirit at the season of Pentecost, says, "He descended that he might invest with his influence—that he might baptize the apostles. For the Lord says, 'But ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.' The grace was not in part; the influence was in full perfection. For as he who goes into the water and is baptized (immersed), is encompassed on all sides by the waters; so were they completely baptized (immersed) by the Spirit. The water envelops externally; but the Spirit baptizes (immerses, envelops) also, and that perfectly, the soul within."—"But that the plenitude of so great grace descending might not escape unnoticed, there came a sound as a signal from heaven.

* The passage, moreover, is decisive in showing that immersion was the *uniform* practice of the primitive Christians.

'And suddenly there was a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,' indicating the presence (of the Spirit)."—"'And it filled all the house where they were sitting.' The house became *the reservoir of the spiritual water;* the disciples were sitting *within*, and the *whole house was filled.* They were *therefore* completely *baptized* (immersed), *according to the promise.*" Cat. 17, § 8.

Chrysostom, in his commentary on Mat. 3: 11, represents the phrase, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit," as expressing the fact that Christians should be "furnished *abundantly*" with the gifts of the Spirit. And after giving an extended list of the spiritual blessings connected with the gospel dispensation, he adds, "He enigmatically expresses *all* of these in saying, 'He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit,' showing by *this figure of speech*, the *abundance* of the grace conferred. For he does not say, 'He shall grant you the Holy Spirit,' but, 'He shall *baptize* (immerse) you *in* the Holy Spirit;' and by the additional mention of fire, he indicates the vehemence and irresistibility of the grace."

According to the representation of Basil, (De Baptismo, Lib. 1, Cap. 2), one who is "*baptized* (immersed) *in the Holy Spirit*," and in that fire which is the source of spiritual light, the word of God, is in a condition to be fully subjected to their influence, and to become transformed to their nature, that is, to become enlightened and purified; "*just as wool baptized* (immersed) *in dye* is changed in respect to its color;" or "*as iron baptized* (immersed) *in fire excited by blowing*, is rendered more susceptible of purification, and becomes not only luminous, but soft and flexible, and can more easily be wrought under the hand of the artificer.

Theophylact, commenting on Mat. 3: 11, says "'He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit,' that is, he shall *inundate* you abundantly with the gifts of the Spirit."

These examples will surely suffice to explain in what sense "the figure of speech," the baptism of the Holy Spirit, was understood by the early Christians. They show clearly why it is that in the ancient versions of the New Testament, we have in such passages as Acts 1: 5; Mat. 3: 11, the translation, "Ye shall be *immersed* in the Holy Spirit." "I indeed *immerse* you in water,—but—he shall *immerse* you in the Holy Spirit." They are, moreover, equally interesting as establishing beyond all ground of dispute the fact, that the ancient Greek Fathers customarily used the word βαπτίζω (baptizo), when alluding to Christian baptism, in the specific sense *to immerse.* We see not how it is possible in the light of these examples to hesitate as to the *meaning* attached to it by the Christian writers of the first centuries.

D.

Some of the lexicons after giving the simple, proper definition of βαπτίζω, viz., to immerse, to dip, to submerge, &c., append, as a remote sense, "*to wash*," or more specifically, "*to bathe*," to wash by bathing or immersion. Were it conceded, however, that this definition is correct, it would by no means warrant the conclusion, that the simple term used absolutely is adapted to express this idea. The occurrence of a single example in which in some *peculiar connexion*, it was in the opinion of a lexicographer, used to denote washing, would be deemed

by him a sufficient reason for giving the sense, to wash, in the list of its definitions. We presume no one familiar with the principles on which lexicons are usually constructed, will dispute the correctness of this remark.* In many of the lexicons, however, the definition, to wash, is *entirely omitted;* and evidently, on the ground that washing is in reality only an *effect* of the act designated, and merely *implied,*—i. e., under certain circumstances,—in its performance. A careful examination of the very few passages in which the sense, to wash, has been assigned to the term, has fully shown that the idea of washing is deducible, rather from attending *circumstances,* than from the word itself; and that there is no reason, even in these special instances, for departing from its original, proper signification, to immerse or dip.

The Jews, for example, were required by the Mosaic law, in certain cases,—and the requisition was subsequently extended by the Jewish "elders," to cases not originally specified,—to "*bathe themselves in water,*" and to "*put into water,*" their utensils, whether they were vessels of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, or any other vessel wherein work was done." Lev. 11: 32; 17: 15; etc. From Maimonides, the celebrated Jewish Rabbi of the twelfth century, who prepared with great care a compendium of the written traditions of the Jews, we learn, that these regulations were understood by them,—and very naturally indeed,—as referring specifically to *immersion,* in distinction from a simple washing. Hence it is said, "Wherever in the law, washing of the flesh, or of clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than the *immersion* of the whole body in a bath." "In a bath," it is further stated, "containing forty seahs of water,—every defiled man," except in certain special cases,—"*immerses* himself; and in it they *immerse* all unclean vessels." The requisition to immerse vessels before using them, extended not only to those "bought of the Gentiles," but also to those manufactured by Jews—"care is to be taken about them, lo! these must be *immersed.*" Particular directions are given respecting the *immersion* of cups, pots, kettles, glass and molten vessels, *couches,* &c. "A bed that is wholly defiled, if one *immerses* it, part by part, it is pure."

Their utensils or persons were thus, as occasion required, *baptized,* i. e., *immersed.* As an *effect* of this, they were *washed* or *cleansed.* The former is related to the latter, as *means* to a *result;* and although in certain connexions allusion may be made to the means for the sake of indicating the result, it is surely as unnecessary, as it is inconsistent with correct principles of interpretation, to confound the two, and contend that the terms by which they are expressed, are synonymous.

"The *bath,*" says Jahn, in his Biblical Archæology, "was always

* An apposite illustration is furnished in the case of the English word *dip.* Among the definitions given in Webster's Dictionary, we find, "*to moisten, to wet.*" And yet no one acquainted with the English language will pretend, that to *dip* an object, is simply to *moisten* or *wet* it. Nor would it follow, could examples be adduced in which in certain connexions language expressive of baptizing or immersing one's self in water, were used to denote washing, that to be baptized or immersed, is simply to be washed; or that a command to baptize or immerse an object, could be fulfilled by simply washing it irrespectively of mode.

very agreeable to the inhabitants of the East; and it is not surprising that it should have been so, since it is not only cooling and refreshing, but is absolutely necessary to secure a decent degree of cleanliness in a climate where there is so much exposure to dust." Bathing was also a common practice among the Greeks and Romans. For this purpose, in addition to their numerous public baths, which were "furnished with various accommodations for convenience and pleasure," and which "commonly contained several separate rooms," families provided themselves,—as is the case in many oriental countries at the present day,—with private baths. The bath in use among the Jews is described as containing "forty seahs of water," or about a hundred gallons; somewhat larger than the portable bath commonly used in this country. The cases in which the use of the bath was required by the Jewish traditions, were exceedingly numerous. Indeed, frequent bathing was unavoidable in a compliance simply with the requisitions of the law. "This part of the law," says Dr. Scott, "the Jews might observe at present: but it is said, that they do not think themselves bound by it, [as is also the case with respect to the offering of sacrifices, and other rites,] now they have no temple, and live in other lands; as it had reference to the sanctuary of God, and the holy land." In many cases, however, ceremonies of ablution for purposes of ceremonial purification, are still scrupulously observed. A numerous Jewish sect living in Abyssinia, are reported as performing a complete ablution whenever they "come from market, or any public place, where they may have touched any one of a sect different from their own, esteeming all such unclean." How strikingly does this accord with what we know of the spirit and practice of the ancient Jews who "held the traditions of the elders." See Mark 7: 1–8; Luke 11: 37–42. Indeed, it is related of the Pharisees, that "if they but touched the garments of the common people, they were defiled, and needed *immersion*."* It will be particularly noticed that what their traditions represent as necessary in such cases, was *immersion*. This was the *thing required;* not simply a washing, but in distinction from this, an immersion, expressed by an appropriate term, *taval*. We should accordingly naturally anticipate that whenever occasion might occur for expressing this term, or the transaction designated by it, in Greek, some word would be selected which would also denote immersion. Any examples, therefore, in which βαπτίζω may be so used, are direct proof that it means to immerse. Immersion is not only in such cases, in all respects a suitable meaning; it is, for reasons independent of the customary, established import of the term, the most natural and probable sense. Why should a ceremony be designated expressly and familiarly "immersion," in one language, and not a term of similar import be employed to express it in another?

E.

The word baptism is not unfrequently in its technical acceptation, applied by the Christian Fathers to various things which they conceived might answer the same *purpose* with baptism; which were *in design and effect* baptism. The same usage is also extended to other terms descriptive of religious ceremonies. The application of Christ's

* See Maimonides quoted by Dr. Gill on Mark vii.

atonement, for example, is styled the "*sprinkling of blood*;" his blood is designated "the blood of *sprinkling*;" not as being such in form, or in reality, but merely as answering a similar purpose. As it would be idle to assume that the word 'ραντισμός (rantismos) does not properly mean *sprinkling*, because there is in these instances allusion to the *object*, rather than to the *act* of sprinkling; it is obviously no less so, to contend that the term baptism was not regarded by the Fathers as signifying immersion, because they frequently used it in a technical manner to indicate the object, rather than the act of Christian baptism.

The fallacy of the arguments by which Mr. Beecher attempts to prove that the Fathers used the word βαπτίζω in the sense *to purify*, rather than to immerse, is sufficiently evident from the simple fact, that the same proof might be adduced to show that they regarded it as meaning to *regenerate*, or to *illuminate*, or to *initiate*, or to *remit sins*. These terms are applied by them as directly and as familiarly, and with as great a variety of construction to baptism, as any term denoting purification. They were each, as occasion required, employed to express what baptism, that is, the rite so called, was conceived to be in its *nature and effects*. The use thus made of them, however, is no proof,—it does not even create a presumption, that they express what was considered to be the proper *meaning* of the *word* βαπτίζω: and it is, in the nature of the case, impossible that precisely the same kind of facts should prove that it was used in the sense, to purify.

The usage to which allusion is here had, exhibits in a striking light the folly of applying to the Fathers to ascertain the nature and import of baptism as an ordinance of the gospel. The fact that they speak of it as regeneration, or illumination, or remission, or salvation, does not prove that these terms are in this case appropriately applied. Nor does the fact that they represent it as a purification, show that it is such in reality, or was so regarded by Christ and his apostles. The truth is *none* of these terms are adapted to designate a gospel ordinance. One who is baptized is *not* "*regenerated*." Nor for the same reason is he *purified*. Baptism is not "the putting away the filth of the flesh." It is not a purification even in a *ceremonial* respect; much less in any sense recognized by the gospel.

Words meaning to purify as applied to the rites of religion, had always been understood to indicate what they properly signified. The Jewish rites did not, it is true, "take away sin as pertaining to the *conscience*." But they were universally regarded as being, in a *ceremonial* or *legal* sense, actual purifications; and *it was only as they were so regarded, that they were so designated*. This fact is one which Mr. Beecher seems to have entirely overlooked. And it is alone sufficient, when duly considered, to show the fallacy of his whole theory. Had Christ employed for the ordinance of baptism, not in some connexion where special reference was made to its symbolical import, but in instituting it, and as its very enacting term, a word meaning to purify, he would thereby have designated it as a rite of purification. The requisition would have been that those who embraced the gospel, should, upon entering the church, be *purified*. And as this could not well refer simply to a ceremonial purification, a very natural inference would have been, that the reference was to a purification affecting the moral state or character. And the doctrine of baptismal purification would, at least with most minds, have found a sufficient support in the very name of the ordinance,—in the simple term of enactment—*be purified*.

That this would have been the unavoidable result, is sufficiently manifest in the conclusions to which Mr. Beecher's theory has conducted himself. He assumes that to baptize is to purify. This leads at once to the position that "baptism," and "the remission of sins," are "synonymous" and "interchangable" expressions. And it is on this identical assumption that a great portion of his argument drawn from the Fathers for determining the meaning of *βαπτίζω*, is founded. Nor does he confine this usage to the Fathers. He represents it as extending equally to the New Testament. Referring to Acts 22: 16, he says, "Arise, and be *purified* or *expiated* is the import of the command." Mat. 23: 19, he expresses thus, "Go ye, therefore, teach all nations, purifying them (that is, *remitting*, to them that repent and believe, *their sins*), into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In the same connexion he observes, "I will conclude this general view by noticing its bearings on a question relating to the commission to baptize. It is this. Why was there a commission given to baptize in Matthew and Mark, and none in Luke and John? This is a question for those to answer who deny the correctness of the view that I have given—for on this view it presents no difficulty at all. The reply is, that a commission to baptize is in fact a commission to purify, that is, a commission to remit sins; and in Luke and John, the disciples do receive a commission to remit sins. Luke 24: 47, 48—'That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations,—and ye are witnesses of these things,' that is, that repentance and baptism should be preached in his name among all nations—for according to Zonarus and the Fathers, baptism is the forgiveness of sins by water and the Spirit."

Here we see, at a glance, the tendency of Mr. Beecher's theory, and the nature of the proof on which he relies to support it. It is in vain that he subsequently remarks, that remission of sins is "through the death of Christ," and that baptism is the rite by which it is "shadowed forth and commemorated." "Baptism," and "remission of sins," are with him synonymous and interchangable expressions. The command to baptize, in the commission, is a command to "*remit sins.*" The preaching of repentance and remission of sins in the name of Christ, is the preaching of repentance and *baptism* in his name; "*for* baptism *is* according to Zonarus and the Fathers, the forgiveness of sins by water and the Spirit."

No one surely holding evangelical sentiments could ever have been tempted to employ such language, except in defence of a *false* and *unscriptural* theory. Does any evangelical Christian *believe* that baptism, as the term is used in the New Testament, means what Zonarus, alluding to its *technical* use, represents as having been in his time, (the *twelfth century*,)—not, as Mr. Beecher would have us believe, the *meaning* of the *word*, but, as the reader will readily perceive,—the *nature* or *province* of the *rite* which it designated, to wit, "the forgiveness of sins by water and the Spirit?"* Does he believe that Christ in

* That Zonarus is simply giving a description of the rite of baptism, or explaining what, in the estimation of his cotemporaries, who ascribed to it a saving efficacy, it was in its nature and uses, would seem to be placed beyond all dispute by the fact, that he goes on to describe it still further, as "the loosing of the bond granted from love to man," "the voluntary arrangement of a second life toward God," "the re-

his final commission commanded his disciples to go and teach all nations, *purifying* them, that is, *remitting their sins*? Can he persuade himself that he is commanded to "arise and be *purified* or *expiated*" (in baptism)? So far is this from being true, there is nothing like purification in any way involved in baptism. Baptism, it is true, is a *symbol* of the washing away of sin. But any thing like an actual purification, expressed or implied, is altogether foreign to the ordinance. It accordingly follows that a term expressive of purification would not have been, in the nature of the case, adapted to express the command. Where there is no purification in fact, none can be expressed, none can be required. We do not, of course, refer to language which may be used in a figurative sense to indicate the symbolical import of the rite, but to the use of terms in their plain, literal acceptation, to express the *thing required*, or *to be performed*. In such a case, we repeat, *where there is no purification in fact, none can be expressed* or *required*.

But not only is there nothing like purification connected with the import of the word baptism as used in the New Testament; this was not, as we have before stated, the meaning attached to it by the Fathers. While, on the one hand, believing that baptism was efficacious in changing the moral state and character of its subjects, they have applied to it,—that is, to the rite,—a variety of appellations indicative of this fact; as regeneration, remission, purification, salvation, etc.; it is equally clear, on the other hand, that they regarded the word baptize as meaning specifically *to immerse*. This Mr. Beecher, adhering to his own principles of interpretation, would be obliged to admit. He maintains (§ 1,) that the meaning of the word as used with reference to Christian baptism, cannot in the nature of the case, be at the same time "both generic and specific;" and that consequently "whichever way we decide as it regards its import, we ought to be *uniform* in its use as applied to the rite of baptism;" that "as applied to a given rite it has not two or many meanings, but *one*, and to that one we should *in all cases adhere*." Now let it be borne in mind, that Mr. Beecher himself acknowledges that in *some* instances, *βαπτίζω* is actually and "plainly" used by the Fathers in the specific sense to immerse. It might easily be shown by a direct appeal to examples equally decisive with those which he has adduced, that they *habitually* used it in this sense. Indeed, we think no one can candidly examine even the few examples given in the preceding pages, without being convinced that they regarded this as *the* meaning, the specific meaning of the word. We have then, and that too, on Mr. Beecher's

leasing of the soul for that which is better," &c. A much more appropriate reference on the part of Mr. Beecher, would have been to 1 Pet. 3: 21, where baptism is described as "the answer of a good conscience toward God." This would have been in truth a scriptural statement of the *nature* and *design* of the ordinance. The language of Zonarus is not even this. Much less can it be regarded as a simple definition of the word. No mere word in any language, ancient or modern, could possibly, without involving a contradiction, be thus defined. And yet this may be regarded as a fair specimen of the kind of proof on which Mr. Beecher mainly relies to establish *the meaning of the word βαπτίζω*, as used by the Fathers.

own principles, decisive proof, that the Fathers did *not* consider the meaning of *βαπτίζω* as being to purify, *but*, on the contrary, *to immerse.*

A single passage in Gregory Nazianzen could hardly fail in itself to lead to this conclusion. He gives (Oratio 40) a formal statement of what was regarded as the mystical import or significancy of various names or appellations by which the initiatory rite of Christianity was then designated. One appellation, for example, indicated that it was a source of *divine illumination;* another, that it was a means of *washing away sin*, &c.; while the name *baptism* (immersion) was indicative of *burial*—it indicated that as the subject was buried in the water, there was at the same time a burial of his sins; or, in the language of Chrysostom, that "the old man was buried," (see page 36); in a word, that there was a *mystical burial* to answer to the burial or immersion of the body in the water; just as there was a mystical *washing*, or the washing away of sin, to answer to the external washing or bathing (*λουτρόν*), (see page 67). This is direct proof that while the Fathers designated the rite by different appellations, as illumination, regeneration, purification, etc., they did *not* imagine that these expressed the meaning of the word baptism; this was in fact a distinct appellation, having its own appropriate and specific meaning; which was not purification, but as *distinguished from this*, a meaning identified with the idea of *burial or immersion in the water.* Indeed, the idea of purification, implied in the washing away of sin, is, like that of illumination, etc., represented by Gregory as being associated with the rite through the medium of an entirely *different* term.

F.

The phrase "the kingdom of God," or "the kingdom of heaven," as employed by the sacred writers, usually denotes the kingdom of the promised Messiah. This in its realization is the kingdom of Christ, extending alike to heaven and earth, and embracing as its members all who are united to him in the covenant of grace. Mat. 28: 18; Phil. 2: 9, 10; Eph. 1: 10; 3: 15.

The phrase, however, as it frequently refers expressly to the kingdom of Christ *in its future or heavenly state*, see Mark 9: 47.; 2 Thess. 1: 5, is, in many, perhaps in most of the passages in which it occurs in the New Testament, applied specifically to his kingdom *as established on earth;* which the apostle describes as being "not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14: 17. See also Mat. 12: 28; 13: 33; Mark 12: 34; etc.

With this application the phrase is evidently to be taken in Mat. 18: 1–4; Mark 10: 14, 15. The disciples had been disputing among themselves as to who should have the pre-eminence; comp. Mark 8: 33–37; Mat. 18; 1–6; and they came to Jesus with the inquiry, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The reference is obviously, not to the heavenly state, but to the distinctions and privileges which they conceived were to be enjoyed in the kingdom of their Master on earth. Our Lord accordingly, referring to the subjects of his reign, replies, "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven;" that is, shall be regarded as my most honored and favored servant. He then proceeds to speak of the light in which the members of his kingdom should be

viewed, the manner in which they should be treated, and the feelings which they should cherish toward each other, Mat. 18: 5, 6; Mark 9: 35, 37; Luke 9; 48. Compare also Mat. 20: 25–27.

In ver. 3 he presents the qualifications necessary for membership in his kingdom. Compare the language with that of Luke 16: 16;—"The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man *presseth into it*. Mat. 23: 13,—"Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither *go in* yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are *entering* to *go in*." See also Mark 12: 34; Col. 1: 13. That which prevented the scribes and Pharisees from "entering" the kingdom, was their pride, their self-exaltation, their unbelief, comp. Mat. 23: 5–14; Jonn 5: 49; while those who in childlike submission and humility, "believed" the gospel, "*entered it* before them," Mat. 21: 31, 32;—a striking illustration of the truth of the declaration, "Except ye *be converted and become as little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven:" that is, it is only on these conditions that membership in it can be attained; that its peculiar privileges can be enjoyed.

G.

From various passages in the New Testament it appears that in the minds of the primitive Christians *spiritual cleansing* and *regeneration* were intimately associated. Both were involved in a *likeness to God*, 1 John 2: 29; 3: 3, 9; 5: 18. Both were effected under the influence of *the truth*, 1 Pet. 1: 22, 23. And in Tit. 3: 5, the change which they indicate is represented as being in reality "*the washing of regeneration*." This is further described in Eph. 5: 26, as "the washing *of water*;" not an external washing; but a washing, which, like regeneration, is "*by the word*," through the agency of God. Comp. Jas. 1: 18; 1 Pet. 1: 23. In accordance with this same mode of representation our Lord, speaking of his disciples as united to him, says, "Ye are *clean through the word* which I have spoken to you." John 15: 3. "Ye are *clean*, but not all." "If I *wash* thee not, thou hast no part with me." John 13: 8, 10.

It thus appears that in the style of the New Testament one who is *unregenerated* is in a state of moral *pollution;* and it is this pollution that renders regeneration necessary. Hence our Lord, (John 3: 5), in showing Nicodemus that it is requisite that all who enter the kingdom of God should be born again, very naturally uses language which is adapted to suggest the reason or occasion for this requisition. He intimates that it is no arbitrary requirement, like a second physical birth: that which gives occasion for it is man's inherent depravity or pollution: he must consequently be born, not "of the flesh," but of that by which his pollution may be washed away, in metaphorical language "of water;" and, for the purpose of indicating still more clearly that the reference is exclusively to the mind, it is added, "and of the Spirit;" or briefly, "of water and Spirit," ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος; of that by which the soul, not the body, may be changed, that is, washed from its sins, and assimilated to the character of God. Hence it is added, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is *born of the Spirit* is Spirit;" and, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be *born again*. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor

whither it goeth; so is every one that is *born of the Spirit*," i. e., "born again." The phrase "born again" in ver. 7 is evidently used to denote what is meant in ver. 5, by being "born of water and Spirit;" and yet in ver. 8 it is exchanged for the simple expression, "born of *the Spirit*;"—as if it had been said, 'To be "born again" is to be born, not indeed of the flesh, but "of water and Spirit," i. e., it is to be "born of the Spirit," through whose agency the soul is freed from its pollution, and renewed in holiness;'—a change which is described in Tit. 3: 5, as the "*washing* of regeneration, and the *renewing of the Holy Spirit*."

Examples in which terms or phrases are used with a figurative application, which except for the circumstances under which they were uttered, or the nature of the subject to which they relate, would naturally be taken in their literal acceptation, are of frequent occurrence in the discourses of Christ; and we know that not unfrequently the literal sense was the one actually attached to them by those whom he addressed. See John 4: 10, 11; 13: 8, 9, where the identical term or figure under examination, is employed. See also John 7: 37–39; 6: 51–60; 2: 9–11; 11: 11–13; Mat. 16: 6–12; Eph. 5: 26; etc.

The position that there is in John 3: 5, allusion to Christian baptism, is, we think, liable to insuperable objections, which, however, our limits will not allow us particularly to notice. Suffice it to say, that the circumstances under which the language is introduced, the object for which it is apparently used, the nature of the subject under discussion, the form of the expression, its relation to the context, a comparison of verses 3, 5, 7 and 8, as well as the analogy of parallel passages, as Mat. 5: 19, 20; 18: 3, 4; Mark 10: 15; etc., all, seem to forbid the supposition.

But even were we to admit that the reference is to baptism, and that the phrase "the kingdom of God," is to be taken in such a sense as to include *specifically* the *visible church*, the admission would not affect the argument which we have derived from the passage in refutation of the principles of pedobaptism. It would still be obvious that no one can properly be recognized as a member of Christ's kingdom until he gives evidence that he is "born again," and that, too, "of the Spirit." The position that natural generation, or being "born of the flesh," is insufficient to membership, would be unaffected. And to introduce into the visible church of Christ, those who have never been born of the Spirit, and who do not, consequently, belong to his kingdom, to apply the rite of public recognition to those who are not by virtue of a new and spiritual birth, in reality entitled to membership, would be equally inconsistent and presumptuous, as in case it were admitted that the being born of water denotes, not baptism, but "the washing of regeneration,"—the passage being regarded as parallel with Tit. 3: 5.

H.

It may be expected, perhaps, that in an examination of the passages in the New Testament which relate to the principles of pedobaptism, allusion should be made to 1 Cor. 7: 14;—"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in (ἐν) the wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband: otherwise your children were unclean; but now they are holy." Before proceeding to state what we consider to be the true sense of this passage, we observe, that if the interpretation usually

claimed for it by Pedobaptists, be correct, it is in more respects than one a direct refutation of the fundamental principles of their system.

1. The passage expressly teaches that the christian is not authorized by virtue of his relation to Abraham or to the Christian church, to consider his children "holy." Their holiness, as here stated, depends, *not* on the faith or privileges or relationship of the believing parent; but upon the "sanctification" of the unbelieving. *Without this* they would be "unclean,"—"cut off," adds Mr. Hall, "from the commonwealth of Christ's church, and debarred from the seal of the covenant." But is this the position that Pedobaptists really intend to assume? Do they wish to be understood as maintaining that *both* of the parents must be in a sense Christians, or in some undefinable manner "sanctified," as the only condition on which the children can be entitled to the privileges of the covenant of circumcision? that, in other words, the simple fact of relationship to Abraham by faith on the part of a christian parent, does not in itself give his offspring a right to baptism and church membership. If so, the ground on which pedobaptism is mainly defended, is, of course, abandoned. If not, their claim to this passage as furnishing an argument for its support, must be relinquished. We call attention particularly to the fact that according to the representation of this passage, the holiness of the children depends *not*, as pedobaptism assumes, on the character or relations of the believing parent, but on the circumstance that the unbelieving parent is sanctified. But

2. On the admission that this "holiness" or "sanctification," possessed on the condition stated, involves a right to certain special religious privileges, it is perfectly obvious that baptism is not included among the privileges involved; that, in fact, the requisite title to them is enjoyed in cases where baptism would be manifestly improper. Pedobaptism assumes that the children of Christians, although unbelievers, are in a *peculiar* sense "holy," and *therefore*, in distinction from other unbelievers, entitled to baptism. The apostle, however,—that is, on the supposition that the Pedobaptist exposition of the passage be correct,—takes a position directly the opposite; he teaches that this "holiness" or "sanctification" is *not* peculiar to them; that it extends equally to a relation of life where it is admitted it has no connexion with qualifications for baptism. It is, of course, involved, that if the children of christians are baptized, it must be for some *other* reason than simply that they are "holy" or "sanctified;" in a word, that the assumption on which their right to baptism is predicated, is without foundation. If a mere assumption in matters affecting the ordinances of the gospel, might, under any circumstances, be excused, there certainly can be no ground for an excuse in cases in which, like the present, there is direct scriptural proof that the assumption is utterly groundless.

The true interpretation of this passage depends mainly, we imagine, on a right decision of the question, whether the apostle intends to assert, that upon the conversion of one of the parties in a marriage connexion, some influence is exerted on the one yet unconverted, by which the latter *becomes* sanctified; and that on *this ground* it is suitable that they should continue together; while *without this*, not only might a separation properly take place, but their children would be

unclean. Against this position we think there are insuperable objections.

1. It seems not to accord with the doctrine of the gospel respecting the sacredness and perpetuity of the marriage connexion. It can hardly be supposed that the apostle, after referring expressly to the teaching of Christ upon this point, in verses 10 and 11, should represent the propriety of the parties continuing together, as depending, not on the essential nature of the relation existing between them; not on the ground, that the connexion having once been formed, they should continue in the enjoyment of it; but on the *mere circumstance* that the unbelieving partner becomes sanctified; on the condition that a *change* is effected in his or her state or character.

2. It is difficult to conceive of any sense in which one continuing an unbeliever can be said to be properly sanctified by a believing partner, and especially, in such a manner that for that reason their children shall not be unclean.

3. The form ἡγίασται, perf. pass., while it does not require the translation, '*has been* sanctified,' seems, nevertheless, more naturally to indicate a state which the subject *already enjoys*, than an influence by which he *becomes* sanctified. It is also worthy of notice that the believing partner is not designated *as* a believer:—it is simply, "the wife," "the husband."

It will be observed, that what constitutes the children "holy," or more strictly, that by virtue of which they are not "unclean," is the same as that which renders it proper for the parents to continue together. And we ask, Is not this *in reality* the sacredness or sanctity of their matrimonial relation? A little examination will, we believe, render it obvious, that this is the identical reason assigned by the apostle for the continuance of the union. His position is evidently this:—'Let there be no separation; for the husband, although an unbeliever, is sanctified, is in a condition of sanctity, (ἡγίασται), not, indeed, in his individual character, not in his relations to God, or to the Christian church, but *in the wife*, i. e., as viewed in her, in his connexion with her, as a husband, (Comp. Philem. 16; 2 Cor. 6: 12; etc.); the relation which exists between them is a sanctified relation, one which exists in accordance with the appointment of God;—let it, therefore, be continued. And so the wife, although an unbeliever, is in a condition of sanctity with respect to the husband. Were it otherwise, were the connexion an unsanctified or sinful one, it would follow that your children, the fruit of such, and of all similar connexions, would be unclean, the offspring of impurity; but as it is (νῦν), they are holy, i. e., not unclean; they are the offspring of a pure and lawful intercourse.'

The use of the terms "unclean" and "holy" or "pure," implies that the purity or impurity attributable to the parents would naturally be attached to the character of the children, or rather to their reputation, to the estimation in which they would generally be regarded. It is not improbable, moreover, that there may be allusion to the regulation of the Mosaic law, according to which an illegitimate child was ceremonially unclean.

In using the expression, "*your* children," the apostle may have intended to intimate that the connexion of which he was speaking, was in reality the same as existed on the part of most parents in the church, a connexion which had been formed before they became Christians.

The argument of the apostle is constructed on the general principle

stated in verses 10 and 11, that the marriage connexion is in its very nature perpetual; that once formed it is formed *for life*. He well knew that the Corinthian Christians would shrink from the admission that all marriage connexions among them formed previously to their conversion to Christianity, were of no account, were unlawful, were not sanctioned by God; and that consequently they were living in impurity, and their children were illegitimate. But, urges the apostle, if this be not the case, if such connexions are really marriage connexions, not only is there no impropriety in their continuance, but it is the duty of those concerned, to avoid a disruption. Comp. verses 13 and 14.

I.

There is a passage in the writings of Irenæus, A. D. 178, which has been claimed as alluding to the baptism of infants. Speaking of Christ, he says, "He came to save all by himself,—all, I say, who through him are regenerated unto God, infants, and little children, and lads, and youth, and the more aged." It has, however, been shown on the most satisfactory grounds, that there is in the passage no allusion whatever to baptism.* "The phrase 'regenerated through Christ unto God,'" says the editor of the Christian Review, "if it mean, 'the general recovery of man through Christ's incarnation and redemption,' has numerous parallels in the writings of Irenæus; if it mean, 'baptized through Christ unto God,' it has *no* parallel, *absolutely none*."

Respecting the testimony of Origen, A. D. 230, who speaks of the baptism of "little ones,"—if, indeed, the Latin translation or paraphrase of his works may be trusted,—as being an apostolic "tradition," it might suffice that we refer to the following remarks of Neander,—"His words in that age cannot have much weight, for whatever was regarded as important, was alleged to be from the apostles. Besides, many walls of partition intervened between this age and that of the apostles, to intercept the view."

It is worthy of notice, however, that Origen, although he evidently refers to infants who had not arrived to years of understanding, does not designate them as such. He simply speaks of the baptism of *little ones, little children, "parvuli,"* a term including in its signification children sufficiently advanced in age to receive instruction, and become the subjects of religious impressions. Irenæus, in the passage just quoted, expressly distinguishes between "little children" (parvuli), and "infants" (infantes). It had doubtless been a practice among the churches to admit to baptism all who were supposed to be savingly acquainted with the gospel, without respect to age. In this number it could hardly fail that children of tender years would frequently be included. Such were the views of Origen, however, respecting the design of baptism, that he would naturally associate these with unconscious infants. He believed there was "in *all*, the natural pollution of sin, which must be done away by water and the Spirit." It was on this account that "little children" were to be baptized. This was, in a general view, the reason for their baptism, even though they were capable of understanding and embracing the gospel; and the same,

* See Christian Review, Vol. III., p. 213.

though they might yet be in early infancy. In his conception they all belonged,—and especially in as far as any reason for their baptism was concerned,—to the *same class*. And hence he would naturally consider the practice of the church in baptizing *any* of the class, as authority for applying the rite to *all without distinction*. The allusion of Origen to the baptism of "little children," as being an apostolic "tradition," is consequently, even should we allow his testimony all the force that is sometimes claimed for it, no proof of the antiquity of the baptism of unconscious infants. It is proof, however, clear and decisive, of the connexion between the practice of infant baptism and the prevalence of the sentiment that baptism is efficacious in "removing the pollution of sin." It shows that the practice is the legitimate fruit of the doctrine,—a doctrine which Origen, for the sake of giving it authority, presumed to ascribe to "the apostles." As his testimony, however, is considered by evangelical Christians to be of no weight in proving the *doctrine* apostolic, it is, in any view, of as little avail in showing that the *practice* originated in apostolic tradition.

J.

"As to the simple inquiry," says Prof. Ripley, "whether these men, (Acts 19: 1–7,) were baptized anew, an affirmative answer seems unavoidable, if we follow the most obvious and natural meaning of the passage, as conveyed both in our translation and in the original Greek." It may also be added, that we should hardly expect that the phraseology "they were baptized in the name of the *Lord Jesus*," would be used with reference to those who were baptized previously to the manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah. Comp. John 1: 31, 33.

The passage, in any view of the case, is of no avail in proving that John's baptism was not Christian baptism. There is satisfactory evidence that these twelve "disciples" had been baptized subsequently to the death of John, and consequently after John's baptism *as such* had become a nullity.

1. Their baptism is sufficiently accounted for in the preceding chapter. Apollos had been at Ephesus preaching "the baptism of John." And as he doubtless presented it as a duty, those who became converted to his doctrine would naturally be baptized. After Apollos had left the city, Paul, upon arriving thither, finds certain men who had received "John's baptism." The natural, the almost unavoidable conclusion, in the absence of all proof to the contrary, is, that they had been baptized under the preaching of Apollos. Why should we suppose that they were baptized in a distant country some thirty years previously, when the circumstances which fully account for their baptism at the place of their residence, are particularly stated in the immediate context in a continuous narrative of passing events?

2. There seems to be a direct intimation in verses 1–3, that they had been baptized in connection with the preaching of Apollos. It is said that while *Apollos was at Corinth*, Paul came to *Ephesus*, and found certain disciples who had been baptized unto *John's baptism*. The reason for this allusion to Apollos, and to the fact that he had left Ephesus, is evidently to be found in the nature of the facts about to be narrated.

3. The interrogation of Paul, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost *since ye believed?*" obviously implies that in his apprehension their

conversion was of recent date, at least subsequent to the effusion of the Holy Spirit at the season of Pentecost; and his impression is most readily accounted for on the supposition that he had been informed that they had been recently baptized.

4. The remarks of Paul in ver. 4, respecting what John taught "the people," are most naturally understood as addressed to those who had never enjoyed John's personal instructions.

5. The ignorance of these men respecting the gift of the Holy Spirit, does not accord with the supposition that they had been baptized and instructed by John, in whose preaching the bestowment of this gift by the Messiah held a prominent place. Comp. Mat. 3: 11; Mark 1: 8; John 1: 33.

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